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**British Pakistani boys in Birmingham schools: education and the
role of religion**

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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GLOSSARY

Talim	knowledge
Tarbiya	growth and development
Tadib	culture
Salaat	prayer
Wudu	ablution
Barkat	blessing
Rehmat	mercy
Wahabi	a sect of Islam
Salaam-alaikum	Muslim greeting; Peace be upon you
Juma	Friday
Ustaadji	teacher
Ramadan	month of fasting in the Muslim calendar
Eid	Muslim festival
Chaa pee ray	drinking tea
Jamaat	preaching trip
Iftari	meal at end of fast
Kameez	Pakistani shirt
Shalwar	Pakistani trousers
Deen	religion
Dunya	of the world
Aur	and
Tahaaraf	introduction
Bud-tameez	disrespectful
Roohani waldain	spiritual parents
Adab	manners
Namaz	prayer
Akhlaq	character
Theek thaak	allright
Naik tareeqa	pious manner
Deeni	religious
Dunyavi	worldly
Allah taala	God
Farz	obligation

ABSTRACT

The study sets out to investigate the educational achievement of British Pakistani boys. Its foundations comprise my own journey; beginning in Pakistan and continuing in Birmingham.

Central to the study is the post-war development of the Pakistani community in Birmingham, growing from a few hundred to their current presence - 14% of the city's population. Pakistani children are now close to becoming the largest ethnic group in Birmingham schools. The study arose out of a concern that large numbers of the community's young people were concluding their schooling without achieving the benchmark qualification¹.

With the backdrop of the national policy response to the education of ethnic minority children, the study relies on research undertaken in three state secondary schools in different parts of Birmingham. The backdrop to the research was provided by numerous documents gathered during my time in Birmingham. The primary research relied on a mixed-methods approach, involving a questionnaire administered to Y11 students and interviews with British-born Pakistani boys, their parents and teachers.

The findings confirmed earlier research, in terms of the importance placed on education by the Pakistani community. Very early in the research it was clear that religion was considered important by the Pakistani children and their parents. This shaped the study and gave rise to a number of implications which are fundamental to the schools in Birmingham. For example, it was found that Pakistani children spend many hours in after-school religious classes. This has a clear opportunity cost, as it takes them away from doing school related work.

The study concludes with a discussion of responsive education that might better meet the needs of Pakistani children so that fewer of them leave school without the benchmark qualification. It also points to the possibilities of an education which integrates the Islamic religious education and education of the world.

¹ 5 A*-C at GCSE, including English and maths.

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In 2010 I went to see Steve Strand, to explore possible work opportunities. While these were not forthcoming, he managed to sign me up for further study. Thus began my doctoral research journey which was to keep me deeply engrossed in learning for the next six years. Throughout this period he generously supported me, often going the extra mile with his prompt comment and feedback. For this I am deeply grateful. I also appreciated his willingness to continue to supervise me after he left Warwick for Oxford. Thanks also to the Teacher Training and Development Agency, whose grant helped to pay half of my fees and got me started on my research journey.

The first few years were taken up accessing and reading what had already been written on the subject of my interest. So, my thanks go to the many in the academic community whose work has provided a framework for my study. I hope others can similarly benefit from the work I have been able to produce.

I would like to thank the staff of the schools involved, for their generosity in facilitating my research, and the students, parents and teachers for being such a critical part of the study. I hope I can do justice to their views and opinions and use the result to make some impact, however small.

As I neared the end I appreciated the help, given by Alison Davies and Razwan Faraz; their proofreading has helped to make the thesis a much tighter document.

Then there is my family. I thank my parents for their sacrifice when they parted with me all those years ago when they sent me to England so that I would have a better future.

And my current family - Sue, Hannah, Adam and Owen - without whose on-going support and encouragement this long journey would not have been possible. So thank you for cheering me on.

Finally, I thank God for his blessing on what I have been able to achieve, especially after the health incident I faced in the middle of my study. I look forward to Him being there on the next leg of the journey, in my effort to try to make some impact.

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own work and has not been submitted for the award of a higher degree elsewhere.

Signed

Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

I begin this chapter with my own personal and professional background. I explain how I became involved in research on educational underachievement, of the White working class, and how this led me to my current ‘problematic’, that is, the educational achievement of Pakistani boys in Birmingham. I explain the role and responsibilities of ‘public intellectuals’. I explain my wish to change the world by providing accessible knowledge, in order to generate a movement for challenging the status quo.

I provide the background to the community's development of social and cultural infrastructure. I outline the national situation concerning Pakistani pupils' achievement. With the help of recent data it is shown that Pakistanis make up the largest group amongst the ethnic minorities who underachieve, both nationally and locally. I point out that locally the problem is one of the particular underachievement of Pakistani boys.

1.2 Starting where you are at

As researchers, we find ourselves in an unusual relationship to the worlds around us. While being very much a part of them, we try to step outside our realities and look inwardly in order to develop analytic understandings. In addition to research we undertake to shed light on matters that concern us, we are advised to make good use of our own life journeys, which Friedman (1990) described as an asset. He labelled this data source as ‘autobiographical sociology’ which highlights the insights gained through autobiographical experiences and information. It is said to contain elements of both ethnography and autobiography. Here we are able to probe our past personal experiences in order to analyse matters of sociological relevance. The task requires us to

start introspectively and inwardly from our experiences and work outward to larger and broader points of discussion and interpretation. It involves recollection, reconstruction and interpretation and analysis of our past phenomena or processes. Friedman (1990) advised us to ask certain questions: what happened to me and why; how the experience compares to that of others and what is its larger sociological significance (p62). Banks (2006) opens his book with the following words:

A major tenet of my work for more than three decades is that the life experiences and values – as well as the historical and cultural context – influence the questions, findings, and interpretations of social scientists and educators. My research and scholarship is a case study of the influence of life story, socialization, and context on research and scholarship (p1).

A number of others have offered similar advice (Mills, 1959; Riemer, 1977; Lofland et al., 2006; Basit, 2013).

So, I bring to the research my personal experience and insight as both a first generation immigrant and an education practitioner. These have enabled me to understand the subject under study, within its context, identify the research questions and the ability to make sense of the data gathered.

Long before the education of Pakistani boys became a research topic, it was a personal experience, for I was one such boy. Gradually, it became a topic to observe, to learn about, to become concerned with and only then, many years later, it became a problem to research. Before I go on to look at the worlds around me and the ‘problematic’ I have chosen as my focus, I provide a brief sketch of my journey; how I got here, both personally and professionally.

1.2.1 My background

I spent my early years in a village in the Pakistani-controlled Azad Kashmir. My connection with Birmingham was established soon after I was born. By the age of two years, my father had decided that he would have better luck in the UK, known locally as *vilayat* (a derivative of Blighty). He was a part of the early cohort of people who had migrated from our country, to the UK. After five years in Birmingham, he relocated back home.

I attended the local village primary school, where I was a conscientious student. Soon after transferring to the secondary school, my family decided to send me to live with my older sister in Birmingham, in the hope that I would have better opportunities for education and employment. I was 12 years of age at the time.

Upon arrival in Birmingham, in line with educational practice (Grosvenor, 1997), I was sent to an Immigrant Reception Centre so that I could be immersed in the English language. After two terms there, I transferred to our neighbourhood secondary modern. My new school served its immediate working class community, previously White but now Pakistani too.

Bigelow (2007) explores the role of social and cultural capital in schooling by telling the story of Fadumo, a Somali teenage girl. She had the drive to learn and determination to overcome any barriers she faced. She would go to a nearby library if she needed a quiet place to study. When she needed help with her homework she would take a bus to a neighbourhood where there was a bilingual homework club. Like Fadumo, I had agency and power. I had a deep love for learning, which I had brought with me, from my birthplace.

Even though I was living in one of the most deprived neighbourhoods and attending a poorly resourced school, I took full advantage of all the learning opportunities on offer, both formal and informal. I became one of the keenest users of my local public library. I also began to attend evening classes in a local adult education institute in order to boost my skills in English. For my school, I was the first pupil who needed a letter of permission from the Headteacher so that I could attend these additional lessons.

Consequently, by the time I left school after three years, I had achieved a number of CSEs (Certificate of Secondary Education). Through attendance at the two schools, I was able to experience British education from an immigrant perspective. I was also able to observe closely White working class life, as well as being a recipient of some racial abuse from them, both at school and in the neighbourhood.

At the time, in the mid-seventies, there was no tradition in our community of staying on at school, beyond the compulsory leaving age of 16. Like all the other boys (girls were rare in our community as they had been left behind in Pakistan), I was expected by my family to leave school as soon as I could, in order to get a job in one of the local factories.

Soon after leaving school in 1974, I began to volunteer at a local Saturday School for Pakistani children. I was also a part of the Asian Youth Association which had been set up by Birmingham's Community Relations Council, to explore leisure provision for Asian young people (BCRC, 1978). Later this became a full-time job when I was appointed as a Youth and Community Worker, through a Birmingham Council Positive Action scheme, which had a particular focus on the Asian community.

Having continued my education (through evening classes and day-release given by my employers), six years after leaving school, I was able to enter university to study for a Bachelor of Education. This was to be supplemented later by a Masters in Social Sciences and then many years later I was to find myself studying for a PhD.

Upon achieving my Bachelor of Education, I worked as a teacher of English for Speakers of Other Languages, for Birmingham's Multicultural Support Service. In the school I was sent to teach, I recall the Pakistani pupils questioning my credentials as a teacher. So unusual it was for them to have a Pakistani in such a role, they would ask me, "Sir, are you a proper teacher?"

I spent the next fifteen years working, also in education, away from Birmingham before returning to the city as an Education Adviser, in 2001. To begin with, my responsibilities included addressing the educational underachievement of ethnic minority pupils. This was to follow, for many years, with a focus on the educational achievement of the White working class leading one colleague to describe me as their 'champion'. During this period, I produced a number of reports (Iqbal, 2008; 2009; 2010; 2012). One of my reports was used as the main text for an Adjournment Debate in Parliament (Hansard 2009). This work started me off on my research and writing journey on educational underachievement as well as enabling me to locate key data sources.

While I was researching the achievement of the White working class, I gradually became aware of the needs of Pakistani pupils. Although, they were not the lowest achievers in Birmingham, I discovered that large numbers of them, especially boys, were leaving school each year without the benchmark qualification.

1.3 Research focus and aims

The problem of ethnic minority underachievement in England was acknowledged in two major Government reports (Rampton, 1979; Swann, 1985). It was here that I first became aware of the underachievement of ethnic minorities. At the time there was a belief amongst education professionals and policy makers that there was nothing to be concerned about Asian children's achievement, as they were doing well at school. I recall as a youth worker challenging this perspective and pointing out that Pakistani children were underachieving, alongside Black Caribbean children whose needs were being recognised as a result of their community's pressure and campaigning (Coard, 1971). Some of the Asian neglect had resulted from their absorption into the 'Black' category (Modood, 1994; 2005) and Pakistani underachievement suffered further by being absorbed in the 'Asian' category, with its higher achieving Indian children. Although it was accepted that the Pakistanis were "the largest minority ethnic group" (DFES, 2006, p7), for many years there was relatively little detailed analysis of factors relating to their achievement (Gillborn & Gipps, 1996; Coles & Chilvers, 2004; Hamashita, 2007). It is my aim to help fill some of this information gap.

Newby (2010) and Griffiths (1998) ask 'why do we do educational research?' and offer a number of possible responses: to impact on policy, to empower ourselves and the people we are researching and to search for truth. Sivanandan (1982) has said: "Knowledge is not a goal in itself, but a path to wisdom; it bestows not privilege so much as duty, not power so much as responsibility... But the business of the educated is ... to turn those skills to the service of their people" (p89). Cushman (1999) has similarly talked about the responsibility of 'the public intellectual' being to serve the local community as well as policy makers, administrators and professionals.

My aim is similar to that of Ladson-Billings (2006). I am concerned about the meaning of my work for the larger public – for real students, teachers, parents, policymakers, and communities in real school settings. I see it as my role to help shape policy in order to improve education of Pakistani boys. I intend to give a voice to the young people and to help to articulate the views of the wider Pakistani community. Like Lather (1986), my aim is to "change, rather than merely describe, the world" (p64). It has been pointed out that, given the size of its ethnic minority population, what goes on in Birmingham has significance beyond the city itself (Warren & Gillborn, 2002). I would certainly hope that this would be the case with my research and that it will have an impact in other towns and cities which have a significant Pakistani presence. For Sandelowsk (1997) knowledge is "used" when it informs and emancipates thought and when it helps to make sense of what was previously incoherent and nonsensical. For her, the goal of research is not the mere accumulation of information, but rather the transformation of understanding. Otherwise, research can be a self-serving activity "aimed at a privileged few that can have no 'real' effect in the material world" (Lather, 1996, p540); based on the cult of expertise that has fostered what Reinharz (1979) terms "the 'rape model' of research: career advancement of social scientists built on alienating and exploitative methods" (p95).

For Basit (2010), knowledge generation is a crucial objective of educational research. Hammersley (1994) similarly saw this to be the point of research. He distinguished research from political activity. The latter he saw as a way to persuade others to do things, by accepting our version of the truth. While the former he saw as a way to "discover, through empirical investigation and rational discussion, which conclusions are sound and which are not, and why" (p294). However, I disagree with his position where he states that the point of research is *not* (my emphasis) to transform the world,

as this is exactly what I wish to achieve. I hope to make a difference, however small, in the education of Pakistani boys. I also disagree with Foster and Hammersley (1998), who question whether it is legitimate for researchers to offer practical evaluations and prescriptions based on conclusions, as this is exactly what I intend to do.

I have drawn on the work of a number of social justice oriented writers and activists. Eqbal Ahmad saw the function of knowledge to comprehend reality in order to change it (Babar 2015). Following Stuart Hall's advice², I would like to tell people how reality really is – to look it in the face. For Basit (2013), the creation of knowledge and its dissemination was a moral act; she saw it as researchers' role to ensure that it leads to educational and social improvement by challenging adverse policies and practices. Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) argued that knowledge generated by researchers has consequences as the findings can influence the climate in which political decisions are made. They advised that researchers, therefore, should use such knowledge as the basis for action to transform the world.

I agree with Davis³ when she points out that “knowledge is useless unless it assists us to question habits, social practices, institutions, ideologies, the state”. For her, new knowledge allows new questions to be asked. Drawing on Critical Race Theory (Rollock & Gillborn, 2011), I do not wish merely to interpret and report on a social situation but to change it for the better. I would like to contribute new knowledge so to help for new questions to be raised. Following Gardner's advice (2011), I will strive to make my work

² <http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/uk-politics/2012/08/stuart-hall-we-need-talk-about-englishness> Accessed 20.02.2017.

³ <https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=angela+davis+delivers+17th+annual+steve+biko+lecture&qpv=angela+davis+delivers+17th+annual+steve+biko+lecture&view=detail&mid=01633E4C941D1FA5B0F001633E4C941D1FA5B0F0&FORM=VRDGAR> Accessed 20.02.2017.

accessible, relevant, persuasive, credible and authoritative in order to get my message across. I hope that the knowledge I produce helps to improve the education of Pakistani children and leads to some transformation, however small. I see the knowledge I have been privileged to acquire as having 'political implications' in contexts beyond the academic world. I see myself as enacting the kind of "civic-minded knowledge-making that engages broad audiences in pressing social issues" (Cushman 1999, p335). Ladson-Billings (2006) asks us as education researchers to help to find answers to pressing education questions. For me, the educational achievement and underachievement of Pakistani young people is currently one such pressing issue for which I hope to provide some possible answers.

The aim of making the knowledge one produces useful also raises questions about accessibility. While the language used in one's writing has to be credible within the academy, it has to be understood too by the wider community. Joeres (1992) asks us to consider the audience we wish to reach. She advises against 'writing into the wind' so that we don't become mired in a separatist language. Lather (1986) similarly advises against use of 'alienating jargon' in what we write. In my view our aim, therefore, should be for our research and the way it is written to be easily understood and to have some benefit. However, I do accept that this is not a straightforward matter. At this stage it has to be accepted that a thesis is a text for a specialist audience, i.e. I have to satisfy the requirements of the academy. Once I have done so satisfactorily I may be able to produce revised text which is written for a more general audience.

Sivanandan (1982) pointed out that the knowledge the intellectual creates should be accessible for the wider community, "expressed not in terms private to him and his peers, but in familiar language..." (p91). Lather (1996) spoke of writing that could be

sold in K-Mart; her euphemism for accessibility. The equivalent aim for me would be to have my work accessible to Sainsbury's' customers or those who frequent the Pak Supermarket. At the conclusion of his research, Willis (1977) had shared his work with his participants. In response, one of the boys had said "The bits about us were simple enough It's the bits in between . . . Well, I started to read it ... then I just packed it in" (p. 195). I hope no one says that about my research.

1.5 Pakistani-Birmingham⁴; development of a community

Table 1 Pakistani presence in Britain 1951-2001

Year	Number of Pakistanis in the UK
1951	10,000
1961	25,000
1971	119,000
1981	296,000
1991	477,000
2001	746,000

Source: (Peach 2006)

Birmingham has had many ethnic communities settling amongst its population (Prem, 1965; Rex & Moore, 1967; Solomos & Back, 1992; Ali, 2007, Chisti, 2008) leading to the city becoming 'superdiverse' (Vertovec, 2007).

⁴ Saeed et al. (1999) discussed the issue of hyphenation in identity. They used the hyphenated identity label 'Pakistani-Scots' upon which I have based 'Pakistani-Birmingham'.

The entry of the migrants was made easier by the passing of 1948 Nationality Act which “gave all imperial subjects the right to free entry into post-war Britain” (Winder, 2004, p332). This was a time of major labour shortage in Britain where the factories and foundries were busy helping to rebuild the country after the war. This meant job opportunities for the men of the subcontinent and many others (Anwar 1979; Phillips & Phillips 1998).

The national profile of the Pakistani community changed from the 1950s (Anwar, 1979; Shaw, 1988), as shown in Table 1. There is diversity within the Pakistani community, in that their origins lie across Pakistan. While the vast majority are from Kashmir (CDP 1977; Ali 2007; Abbas 2010; Rahman 2011), significant numbers also have their origins in areas such as Attock, Ghurghushti, Nowshera, Peshawar, Jehlum, Gujrat, Rawalpindi, Multan, Faisalabad and Sialkot (Dahya 1973; Chishti, 2008).

Similar to the national development of the community, the numerical presence of Pakistani-Birmingham changed rapidly from the 1950s, reaching 40,565 by 1981 and constituting 4 per cent of the city’s total population (Anwar, 1996). By 1991, at 6.9%, Birmingham had the largest Pakistani population of any British city (BCC, 1991, p9; Tackey et al., 2006). Having been “the *largest* single ethnic [minority] group” (my emphasis) (BCC, 1991a) for some time, the community are predicted to make-up 21% of the city's population by 2026 (Dorling & Thomas, 2008).

Upon arrival in Birmingham as elsewhere in the UK, Pakistanis were faced with a ‘free-market’ and difference-blind approach⁵ of treating everyone the same even though

⁵ Also referred to as ‘colour-blind’ which is based on the assumption that differences such as racial, group membership do not make a difference to outcomes (Tarca, 2005; Bonilla-Silva, 2010). Such a belief among dominant White people can be traced to a lack of personal understanding about how race shapes

people had different needs, circumstances and historical trajectories. According to Sutcliffe and Smith (1974) “...the Government had to maintain that there was no difference between immigrant Commonwealth citizens and indigenous Britons” (p369). For Newton (1976) this is a problem of the pluralist theory which “tends to work on the assumption that each and every interest is equally capable of organising and defending itself”(p228).

Historically, given the vast majority of Pakistanis arrivals originated from rural and under-developed areas, their education level was much lower upon entry to the UK compared to many other migrant communities (Anwar, 1979). The Pakistanis, therefore, lost out to the more advantaged Indian community or the more organised and vocal Black Caribbean community. This poor start of the Pakistanis was to lead to the community remaining behind other ethnic minorities (Abbas, 2010). It also provides a critical backdrop to educational achievement of the young people from the community. Pakistanis are said to be a religious⁶ community (Georgiadis & Manning, 2011), with a majority being Muslims⁷. In the Birmingham context, this can be seen from the most recent census data which showed that the two city wards – Washwood Heath and Bordesley Green- where the fewest people said they had ‘no religion’ were mainly populated by Pakistanis (Iqbal, 2013). While there is much more that could be said in

life experiences - how it privileges some and disadvantages others. For Cose (1997), colour blindness is presented as a way of equalising race-related inequalities though in reality it acts as a ‘silencer’- a way of quashing questions about the continuing racial stratification of the society. A related concept is ‘de-racialised’ (Crozier, 1999), explained later.

⁶ Howarth and Lees (2010) define religion in three ways: as a meaning system; to do with the visible signs of religious beliefs and practices; or both combined. They also note the practice, by researchers, of allowing self-definition of religion, which is the approach I have taken.

⁷ According to the 2011 Census, 92 % of the Pakistanis in England identified themselves as Muslim (Costu, 2013; Hussain and Sherif, 2014). As to what 'Muslim' means, Lewis (2003) points out that for some their Muslim-ness is mainly cultural, for others it is about religious rituals. There are also some for whom it may be little more than an attribute of ethnic identity. These perspectives are worth bearing in mind in interpreting what follows.

this respect, as this is not a study of religion but one of education, the discussion has to be restricted. My research has shown that Birmingham's Pakistanis suffer from exclusion in a number of areas (Iqbal, 2013). I gathered data from a number of city organisations in the public, private and third sectors. This showed that there was a city-wide under-representation of Pakistanis as employees. If they were in work, many would be working in low paid jobs, in the taxi business, takeaways and retail businesses.

The Birmingham Stephen Lawrence Inquiry Commission (BSLC, 2001) showed that there was under-representation of Pakistanis in the Council's workforce, by 4.9% - indicated by the gap between their presence in the Council's current workforce (2%) and in the local population (6.9%). According to data I gathered (Iqbal, 2013), as at June 2012, the proportion had increased slightly, from 2% to 3.9%. However, when looked at against the Pakistani presence in the local population (13.5%), this meant an even bigger underrepresentation, of 9.6%. It has been pointed out that big employers and service providers do not take race equality seriously (Abbas & Anwar, 2005). The data showed that many organisations which claimed to have a diverse workforce often tended to employ other ethnic minority groups such as Black Caribbean and Indian. For example, Birmingham University employed 15.4% ethnic minority staff, out of whom only 1.2% were from the Pakistani community (Iqbal, 2013).

Within the education sector, under-representation of Pakistanis was apparent amongst both the workforce and the composition of school governing bodies. For BSLC (2001), it was of fundamental importance that the teaching workforce and governing bodies reflected the ethnic composition of schools. My research showed that Pakistanis made up 3% of the total number of school governors. Cox (2001) pointed out that people not fluent in English faced discrimination. They experienced an atmosphere that tended to

favour educated professionals who had a better grasp of the jargon associated with the education process. He also pointed out that many people from ethnic minorities felt that they were not taken seriously because their limited English often meant they were unable to put their point across effectively in meetings⁸. As a result, many only attended meetings infrequently and then drifted away.

1.6 Pakistani pupils, the national picture

Table 2 Achievement at GCSE and equivalent (including English and mathematics) for pupils at end of Key Stage 4 – England

Pupil group	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
All pupils	50.7	54.8	58.2	58.8	60.6
Pakistani	42.9	49.1	52.6	54.4	55.5
Gap	7.8	5.7	5.6	4.4	5.1

Source: (Strand, 2015)

The problem of Pakistani achievement is complex. Whether the young from this heritage underachieve depends on who they are compared with. The usual comparison is with White children. The Social Exclusion Unit (SEU, 2000) pointed out that “in 1998, only 29% of Pakistani ... achieved the standard (five or more GCSE at grades A-C) compared to 47% of White pupils and 54 % of Indian pupils” (p21). The source of the data was Birmingham local authority. According to the Department for Education (2014), the gap between Pakistani pupils and their White peers nationally (in terms of

⁸ It is worth pointing out here that, alongside the above group of governors, there are now a growing number of second or third generation Pakistanis, who, having been brought up in the UK and educated here expect more from the education system. They are also capable of assertively and confidently articulating their views on governing bodies and in other situations.

achieving the benchmark qualification) was 7.2% in 2008/9 and had reduced to 5.4% in 2012/3. At the Birmingham level, the gap between the groups was 3% in 2010 and has reduced to 2% (BCC, 2013, p50). It is likely that this gap has widened as a result of the 'Trojan Horse'⁹ controversy and its damaging impact on schools' work.

Historically, part of the problem with Pakistani under/achievement had been to do with its identification. The Youth Cohort Study broke down the 'Asian' category into Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi, in 1991 (Strand et al., 2010). This made it clear that much of the high achievement of the 'Asian' group reflected the achievement of Indian children and that Pakistanis were underachieving compared to White children (Gillborn & Mirza, 2000). Earlier Gillborn and Gipps (1996) had presented data (p22) for pupils gaining five or more GCSE higher grade (A*-C) passes by ethnic origin which had comprised three groups: Asian, African Caribbean and White. The source of the data was Birmingham Local Education Authority, where papers circulated to a meeting of the 'Education Department – Asian Achievement Group' (BCC, 1998) contained the data on achievement which spoke of 'Asian' children.

Pakistanis have certainly been shown to be an *underachieving group* ever since specific data on them has been published. According to Gillborn and Mirza (2000) "African-Caribbean and Pakistani pupils have drawn the least benefit from the rising levels of attainment; the gap between them and their White peers is bigger now than a decade ago" (p14). The report showed, in 1997, 28% Pakistani pupils achieving five or more higher grade passes, compared with 44% for the White group. They also pointed out that social class was a significant factor in educational achievement with a far greater

⁹ This centred on allegations of a systematic attempt to infiltrate and Islamicise secular schools (Clarke, 2014; Kershaw, 2104; House of Commons, 2015).

impact than race and gender. Demack et al. (2000) investigated variations of social class, ethnicity and gender and showed that the percentage with five high grade passes... worsened for Pakistani boys, from 21% in 1988 down to 16% by the end of the study period, in 1995. They pointed out that the problem of Pakistanis was one of both race and social disadvantage.

According to DFES (2006) minority ethnic pupils usually begin with low levels of attainment but make good progress. “However, the continued existence of attainment gaps between these minority ethnic groups and the average for all pupils, shows that, on average, they do not completely catch up with their higher attaining peers” (p49). Here it is worth asking what happens to the gap in achievement between different groups of children; does it narrow, close altogether or become wider? The answer is: it depends on the approach taken by education practitioners and policy makers and the intersection of effects of ethnicity and socio-economic status. Ceci and Papierno (2005) pointed out that where the gap-narrowing interventions are universalised – given not only to the group of children who most need assistance but also to the more advantaged group, the gap can get bigger; in their view to narrow the gap what is needed are interventions *targeted* at the children who have fallen behind.

This is becausealthough the disadvantaged children who most need the intervention do usually gain significantly from it, the higher functioning or more advantaged children occasionally benefit even more from the intervention. The result is increased disparity and a widening of the gap that existed prior to universalizing the intervention (p150).

While recognising that universal approaches are usually politically more acceptable, gaps between the advantaged and disadvantaged are only likely to close through focused and targeted interventions that boost the lower scoring group without adding to the higher

scoring group's pre-intervention advantage. An example of gap-widening was presented by Gillborn (2008). He pointed out that while, between 1992 and 2004, Pakistani pupils improved in their GCSE attainment, so did others, especially White pupils. Because the latter had improved their performance to a greater extent, it meant the gap between the two had become wider- from minus 11 in 1992 to minus 18 in 2004 (p58). One explanation for the above was the range in practices between LEAs in relation to setting targets, some of which may have actually made the gap wider, as explained by Gillborn and Mirza (2000):

- *inclusive targets*: the lower a group currently attained, the higher its improvement target. This was the declared approach in Birmingham where it spoke of 'differential targets'.
- *common improvement targets*: regardless of each group's current position, the same target was set for them. Contrary to its declared approach, it was this universal, difference-blind approach that was often adopted in Birmingham.
- *increase inequalities targets*: higher targets were set for higher achieving students with the result that, if the targets were achieved as set, it would cause "Pakistani and African Caribbean pupils fall further behind their White peers" (p29).

The authors concluded that it "is difficult to discern what kind of vision informs target setting in these LEAs, suffice it to say that, in both (the latter) cases the authorities seem to be planning for greater ethnic inequality in the future" (p29).

Table 2 illustrates how Pakistani progress improves but so does the progress of others which means they continue to be below the national average, with a similar on-going gap between them and 'All pupils'.

The gap appeared to continue as pointed out by Strand (2014):

The most recent 2011 national data on attainment at age 16, using the threshold of achieving five or more GCSE passes at A–C grades including English and mathematics, indicates the performance of Black Caribbean (48.6%), Pakistani (52.6%) and Black African (57.9%) groups is below that of their White British peers (58.2%), while the achievement of Bangladeshi (59.7%) and Indian (74.4%) students is higher (p132).

In an email communication (Overington, 2012), the Department for Education (DfE) let me know that it was a matter of concern for them that there were attainment gaps between minority ethnic groups and their peers. With reference to Pakistani pupils, the DfE acknowledged that as a group, they continue to underperform relative to their peers:

In 2011 for example, 67.5% of Pakistani pupils achieved national expectations at the end of primary education, compared to 72.5% of all pupils, a gap of 6 (sic) percentage points. A similar gap exists at key Stage 4 where in 2010, 49.1% of Pakistani pupils achieved five or more good GCSEs including English and mathematics, compared to 54.8% of all pupils, a gap of 5.7 percentage points.

1.7 Pakistani pupil attainment; the situation in Birmingham

Table 3 Percentage of pupils in Birmingham schools from the top two ethnic groups; 1995, 2005, 2011

Ethnicity	1995	2005	2011
White British	60.2	51.0	37.9
Pakistani	16.7	18.9	24.5

Source: (BCC 1995, 2005, 2011)

In the earlier stages of the post-war migration it was mainly the Black Caribbean community which had established a presence in the UK (Phillips & Phillips, 1998). This was also the case in Birmingham (Grosvenor, 1997). This could be seen from the ethnic makeup of Birmingham schools during the 1950s. In 1959, most of the approximately 1000 ethnic minority pupils were reported to be West Indian¹⁰ (Rose et al., 1969; Sutcliffe & Smith, 1974). Later, the school population began to change, in favour of Asian, especially Pakistanis, as their fathers began to settle down in the city and call their wives and children to join them. It was during this phase that I arrived in the city, in 1970.

The growth in the number of Pakistani pupils continued during the next few decades leading them to become the largest ethnic minority group, at 24.5%; second only to White British children (Table 3). Nationally Pakistani children have also increased, in both number and as a proportion of the overall – from 2.7% of the pupil population in 2003, to 3.9% in 2013 (Strand, 2015).

Table 4 GCSE results in Birmingham by ethnicity, 1993

Ethnic group	5 or more A-C grades	Above/below City average
White	32.9%	+3.4%
Pakistani	17.1%	-12.4%

Source: (BCC, 1993)

¹⁰ This was how Black Caribbeans were described at the time.

The success of minorities has been linked to the prosperity of the city. “Education is one of the crucial means by which the city will develop the multi-cultural diversity agenda. However, the current educational experience of large sections of the minority ethnic communities are likely to impede real progress” (BSLC, 2001, p17). With reference to Pakistani pupils, Birmingham local authority has been aware, since 1993, of their low levels of achievement, (Table 4). The question that arises is whether enough has been done to remedy the situation. Latterly, the local authority has acknowledged that Pakistani pupils were one of the largest ethnic groups so any improvements in their attainment would have significant impact on Birmingham’s overall performance. It was reported that, of the “6900 students not achieving 5 A*-C including English and maths, last year, 3100 were White British and 1300 were Pakistani heritage” (BCC 2009, p2). Significantly, for the Pakistanis, the report went on to point out that not only were they the largest non-White group, at 22%, the community was also much younger on average than the White British population and thus the “percentage of Pakistani heritage children attending Birmingham schools is increasing while the percentage of White British children is decreasing”(p2).

The findings of my current research were presented to the top-level leadership, for education and cohesion, at Birmingham City Council, on 17 December 2013. For the meeting the data in Table 5 was produced to show the size of the problem in relation to Pakistani underachievement in Birmingham. My presentation not only made clear the continuing progress of the authority and its schools leading to the improving levels of achievement by Pakistani pupils but also pointed to the still significant numbers of them leaving school without the benchmark qualifications. I also drew attention to the on-going attainment gap between the pupils overall and Pakistani pupils, pointing out that the gap had widened – in 2006, Pakistanis were 18.6% of the total who did not achieve

the benchmark qualification. By 2012, this had increased, to 22.9%. While there was a continuing percentage improvement for the Pakistani pupils, the actual numbers of them leaving school without the benchmark qualifications only reduced marginally; from 1377 in 2006 to 1133 in 2012. The explanation for this can be found in the growth in numbers of Pakistani pupils in the city schools; 27,123 in 1995 and 42,558 in 2011 (BCC, 1995; 2011).

Table 5 Percentage of Birmingham pupils (overall and Pakistani) not achieving 5A*-C at GCSE, 2006-2012

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Total
LA	7388 (59%)	7384 (58%)	6996 (55%)	6428 (52%)	5566 (45%)	5110 (42%)	4934 (40%)	43806
Pakistani	1377 (68%)	1353 (64%)	1351 (60%)	1450 (58%)	1194 (48%)	1152 (46%)	1133 (44%)	9010

Source: BCC, 'Report to the Children and Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee /Cabinet', 26 January 2011 (Table 7c), 27 February 2013 (Table 7d).

1.8 Birmingham's Pakistani boys; a particular problem

Attention has been drawn to the particularly low levels of attainment by Pakistani boys in Birmingham (Hewer 2001; Warren & Gillborn, 2003). The Pakistan Forum had raised the problem with the local authority (Akhtar, 1996) which they acknowledged: "By the end of key stage 4 over the last three years (1995-97) Pakistani boys achieving 5 or more A-C grades have remained 'stuck' on 20%.... The average for all boys is 30%" (BCC, 1998a, p8).

According to the most recent data, it can be seen (Table 6) that, as a norm, Pakistani boys' achievement was generally behind that of Pakistani girls. Between 2006 and 2011 there was an average gap between them of 8.5%. The average point gap for the same period for White British boys (whose attainment was lower than White British girls) was 7.1.

Table 6 Birmingham Pakistani boys and girls achieving 5 or more A*-C at GCSE, 2006-2011

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Pakistani boys	29	33	35	37	47	50
Pakistani girls	35	39	45	48	57	58
Gap	6	6	10	11	10	8

Source: Scrutiny Report (BCC 2008, 2013).

1.9 Conclusion

In this introductory chapter, I have explained the links between my personal journey and my focus of research. As context, I outlined the post-war development of the Pakistani community in Birmingham, providing a background to the community's settlement in the city and development of social and cultural infrastructure. I pointed out that religion was significant for the Pakistanis. I shall elaborate on this later.

I outlined the national situation concerning Pakistani pupils' achievement which showed that, initially they were absorbed within the 'Asian' category as a consequence of which they were assumed to be achieving as well as the White children. With the help of recent data it was shown that Pakistanis made-up the largest group amongst the ethnic minorities who underachieved i.e. numbers who left school without the benchmark qualifications. With reference to Birmingham data, I showed that the same problem existed at the local level and that it was a particular problem affecting Pakistani boys.

Chapter 2: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

I begin the chapter with a discussion of national policy response to education of immigrant-origin pupils, however one that prioritised African Caribbean pupils. I draw on my personal involvement within Birmingham Education. I outline the development of different phases of multicultural education and its funding. I review existing literature which is relevant to this study, in order to identify the research questions which are listed at the end.

2.2 Education of minorities; a look back at the past

It is important to learn from the different phases of education of minorities (Parker-Jenkins et al., 2004; Race, 2005; Tomlinson, 2008). The first, 'do-nothing', phase (Tickly et al., 2005) operated within the wider social context of hostility and resentment towards the migrants (Foot, 1969; Dummett, 1984; Hiro, 1991). This was followed up by an emphasis on teaching immigrant children literacy and numeracy. Next came multicultural and the anti-racist education (Gill et al., 1992). The comprehensive Swann Report (1985) summed up the situation thus: "...central Government appears to have lacked a coherent strategy for fostering the development of multicultural education..." (p220). However, the particular situation of groups such as Pakistanis was not about to get any better as the government policy shifted to the needs of "*all* (my emphasis) children, irrespective of race, colour or ethnic origin..." as stated by the then Secretary of State for Education, Keith Joseph, in his foreword to Swann. This was an early example of a 'colour-blind' policy which would disregard difference in background of the pupils; something that would become more of a norm under the Coalition government, which came into power in 2010.

Later, Modood and May (2001) pointed out that there was little support, nationally, for multicultural education, which they saw as being “patchily experimented with by some local authorities and schools” (p308). This was supported by Jenkins et al. (2004) who, in their research for the Teacher Training Agency (TTA), found that whilst there were many studies on equal opportunities, race and education in the 1980s and early 1990s, the post-1995 period revealed far fewer such studies. With some exceptions - the *Aiming High* strategy (DFES, 2003a) which identified the characteristics of the successful school in tackling underachievement – from here onwards power and influence began to transfer to central government and schools directly (Brighouse, 2002), leading to a deprioritisation of LA initiatives which had previously supported multicultural education (Ollerearnshaw et al., 2003). Ofsted also began to ignore race equality in their inspections (Tikly et al., 2005).

2.2.1 Gaps in education

From the perspective of minority communities there were certain gaps in the state education, which they tried to fill through supplementary education. This was particularly so in the area of religion, where the gap had arisen due mainly from the secularist nature of state education (Felderhof et al. 2007; Arthur, 2015).

Another shortcoming involved the teaching of mother tongue(s). Education policy was focused on teaching of English, which was predicated on 'subtractive' bilingualism (Fillmore, 1991) and ‘subtractive schooling’ (Garza & Crawford, 2005). Consequently, children, such as those of Pakistani heritage, often came to school speaking a number of languages but “become monolingual as the opportunities to use and develop their knowledge and skills in their first languages decrease” (NALDIC, 2014). This has been referred to as the ‘monolingualising’ role of education (Heller, 1995; Robertson, 2006;

Kenner et al., 2008; Conteh & Brock, 2011; Sharples, 2014), within the wider context of monolingual national curriculum (Safford & Drury, 2013), reinforced by teachers with a monolingual mindset (Ellis, 2004) and a majority community that is generally hostile to bilingualism (Rosowsky, 2010).

As an exception, the Bullock Report (1975) did encourage schools to support minority languages which influenced practice of some schools (Ofsted, 2008a), including Moseley School in Birmingham, which offered Urdu in its languages curriculum. Some schools also offered Arabic, which is valued by Pakistani children given that it is the language of the Quran. Bell Vue school in Bradford was reported to have notable minority languages provision (Ofsted, 2012), which may provide a model for others. It had well qualified Urdu and Arabic teachers who used modern language teaching methods and drew on contemporary issues in order to ensure the relevance of the curriculum. The provision was described, by the students as ‘fun’ and ‘excellent’ (p2). The curriculum was enhanced by trips abroad, such as to Egypt, where students had the opportunity to speak Arabic in everyday situations. The Arabic provision at a number of other schools was reported by Tinsley (2015). Within Birmingham, Oldknow Academy was praised for its Arabic provision, including for its trip to Saudi Arabia (Ofsted, 2013). 60% of the cost of the trip had been met by the parents (YouTube, 2014).

2.2.2 Focus on Pakistani pupils

It is necessary to point out that Pakistanis have been disadvantaged in much of the post-war policy making related to ethnic diversity. In Britain, according to Modood (2012), “virtually nobody, policymakers, the media, or academics, talked about Muslims until the late 1980s, the time of the Salman Rushdie affair” (p49). For Muslims we can read Pakistanis, given that, as shown earlier, almost all follow Islam as their religion.

When it comes to race and education much of the attention has focused on African Caribbean young people. According to Gillborn (2008) this partly reflected the Black community's history of higher profile political mobilisation. Taylor and Hegarty (1985) reported that Black parents "often vociferously complained about their children's educational experience" (p4) while pointing out that no such concerns being expressed by the Asian parents. One expression of the Black demands was the publication of the pamphlet by Coard (1971), about how the West Indian child had been made educationally subnormal in the British education system.

The concerns of the Black community were recognised by the government, leading to a national policy debate on educational underachievement but one which "prioritized African Caribbean experience" (Modood & May, 2001, p310) as exemplified by the Swann Report (1985). Parekh (1992), who was a member of Swann, pointed out how the Committee's African Caribbean members were able to influence its work in favour of their own community; the Asians were not able to exert similar pressure in favour of their own community. The 'prioritisation' of Black Caribbean pupils can also be seen in the publication of a number of government publications (DFES, 2004a; NCSL, 2004; DFES, 2005; Tikly et al., 2006; DFES, 2007; DCSF, 2009). There were a number of other publications with the same focus (McKenley et al., 2003; LDA, 2004; Demie et al., 2006; Tomlin, 2006).

The needs of groups such as Pakistanis continued to be ignored as acknowledged in a government report (Coles & Chilvers, 2004). "Over the years there has been almost no research regarding the position of Muslim pupils in the education system. Nor has there been much research concerning the dominant cultural groups that make up the Muslim communities, like Pakistani ...pupils" (p61). According to the authors, a system that

relied on the enthusiasm of individual schools, teachers or LEAs would not produce an effective curriculum reflecting the experiences and heritage of Muslim pupils. In their review for the TTA (Teacher Training Agency), most of the studies unearthed by Parker-Jenkins et al. (2004) were concerned with ethnicity rather than religion which meant the exclusion of Pakistanis for whom religion was very important. The review recommended that more research should be conducted on the role of religion is aspect.

One possible reason for the exclusion of Pakistanis was the predication of policy on political blackness, which ‘silenced’ Asian communities (Hall 1991). Modood (1998; 2005) pointed out that, unlike the Black Caribbean community for whom skin colour was prominent in the self-description of their identity, for South Asians it was their religion that had such prominence. He pointed out that this thinking was widely prevalent “as is reflected in virtually all CRE publications, local authorities’ race discourse, academic texts, the ‘quality’ press, radio and television, as well as in documents of most central government departments and many large employers” (p47). For a period Birmingham used ‘black’ to mean all ethnic minorities, including the label ‘Black Asian’ (BCC, 1996; 1997).

There was occasional focus on Pakistani pupils (DFES, 2003a). HMI (2004) spoke of schools reporting their “aim to ensure the cultural, religious and linguistic heritages of pupils are not left at the door of the school, but welcomed inside and valued within the school curriculum” (p3). DCSF (2008)¹¹ was particularly notable in this respect and may provide a model in the context of this study. Given that majority of the pupils covered

¹¹ Significantly this was archived by the Coalition government’s DES and ‘not to be considered as government policy’.

were from a Muslim background, the document was significant in its recognition of, and references to, religion:

- Characteristics of inclusive schools: to include a culture of mutual respect for pupils' cultures, religions and languages reflected in the school's curriculum.
- Identity and respect: leading to pupils experiencing a greater sense of belonging. Emphasis is placed on the development of staff and pupils' awareness of Islamic heritage as well as Islamophobia (Lopez, 2011) and racism.
- An inclusive curriculum: so pupils could see their cultural and religious heritages, histories and languages reflected in the curriculum. Examples were provided such as the inclusion of Muslim contribution to European learning and using Islamic content such as teaching calligraphy, mathematics, design technology, music and art.

The document stressed the positive potential of pupils' religion in raising their attainment. "...this emphasis can contribute significantly to the moral climate of a school, encouraging high standards of respect and behaviour which are upheld by the religious belief systems of pupils' families" (p16). The document showed that, out of all groups, their religion was the most important for Pakistani pupils. Richardson & Wood (2004) explored the key factors underlying the success of British-Pakistani learners, especially those of Kashmiri heritage. It pointed out how schools could capitalise on the pupils' diverse language skills, stressed the significance of home-school relationships and identified the implications for CPD. They, like Merry (2005), asked whether state schools had a responsibility to nurture the learners' religious identity.

In a government report, Strand et al. (2010) pointed out that there was a particular problem with underachievement of Pakistani boys. "A slightly larger gap remains for Bangladeshi boys in comparison to White British boys (56.0% vs. 59.5%). However this gap is small compared to that between White British and Pakistani boys..." (p65). For the Pakistanis, it was accepted that "they are an ethnic group with much in common with Bangladeshi students so some tables also include Pakistani students as a further comparison group" (p68). The data underlying their report - (Table 7) - removed any doubt that Pakistani attainment was low when compared with White British, even lower than Bangladeshi pupils. As to trends¹², they presented data from 1991¹³ to 2006 which showed the consistently low attainment of Pakistanis, compared with White British. There was a particular problem with the low attainment of Pakistani boys when compared with White British boys.

In spite of this being the case, Pakistani children were left out of the analysis and subsequent discussion in the report, which had, as its focus, only pupils of Bangladeshi, Somali and Turkish heritage. Strand (2014) explained to me that the Government were explicit that they did NOT (original emphasis) want Pakistanis to be included in the report. "They got anxious in case the underachievement was seen as a *Muslim* (original emphasis) problem; they got cold feet." Elsewhere, Strand (2016) pointed out "...but I was not allowed to talk about Pakistani pupils...only Turkish, Bangladeshi & Somali."

¹² See charts on pages 64 & 66.

¹³ Prior to this no distinction was made within the overall Asian group.

Table 7 Public exam results at age 16 by ethnic group (LSYPE, 2006, Table 24, p69)

Ethnic group	5 GCSEs A*-C	5 GCSEs A*-C inc English and maths
White British	59%	48%
Bangladeshi	58%	41%
Pakistani	53%	40%

2.2.3 The Birmingham response to minority pupils

To respond to the education needs of its newly arriving minority pupils Birmingham set up a department for the teaching of EAL (Rose et al., 1969; BABP, undated), including two Reception Centres for intensive English teaching. Upon arrival in the city as a twelve year old, I attended one of these centres. The authority was also the first to issue guidance on the teaching of world religions (Cox, 1976; Joly 1995). By the early 1980s, Birmingham had established a Multicultural Support Service. This was where I began my teaching career, in 1983.

Later, the LA published a strategy for underachieving groups, which included Pakistanis. It established two achievement groups – one for Asian and the other for African Caribbean pupils¹⁴, with associated achievement plans (BCC, 2003; 2003a). The strategy had the expressed aim to 'close the gap'. It set out “a planned reduction of 5% per annum of ‘the equality gap’ that exists between these groups and the overall averages.

¹⁴ These included head teachers, LA advisers and members of minority communities.

This was to be achieved by *differential* (my emphasis) target setting for individual schools” (BCC, 2002, p2).

The plans described underachievement as a ‘systemic phenomenon’¹⁵. “Asian Heritage young people underachieve because they are educated in an education system...which exhibits aspects of racism” (p2). The plans committed the LA to work with schools “as an external change agent”, to provide services to underachieving groups and by providing strategic leadership and management in the city.

Similar to the national situation, Birmingham also prioritised the needs of African Caribbean pupils, as shown by its production of numerous reports (BCC, 2000; BCC, 2003b; Walker & Brown, 2000; Tomlin & Hatcher, 2002; Bean & Cham, 2003; Wisdom 2006). This was as a result of the activism of the local Black Caribbean parents (Warren & Gillborn, 2003). "No comparable influence by other communities was brought to our attention..." (p53). Grosvenor (1997, p150) had similarly found the Caribbean community as ‘confrontational’, ‘disrespectful’ (of authority) who ‘complained vociferously’ and wanted equality with White people. They were able to articulate their case to the local authority in a way which was difficult to ignore (Newton, 1976). An illustration of this was provided by Brighouse (2008); he talked about a meeting he attended, as the Chief Education Officer, with the African Caribbean community. He referred to it as a ‘baptism of fire’:

“The hall was full of 300 or so people from the African-Caribbean community. All were angry. All felt let down by the education system. Most were in despair. It was difficult not to be defensive and almost impossible to persuade them that I would or could contribute anything”.

¹⁵ Described in these words: “the education system is not always as effective as it might be in meeting the needs of some learners. In particular, the curriculum does not always take account of the heritage, cultures and concerns of minority ethnic groups” (BCC, 2004a, p1).

For Newton (1976), the political system does not respond equally to different groups; some they are forced to respond while others they can ignore without any cost. “The formal arrangements of liberal democracy.....do not ensure that each and every voice, or each and every interest is attended to with equal care, or that all voices are heard in the first place” (p236). As a consequence, “the system responds differentially to different interests according to the strength with which they can press their case” (p235). Later, he points out that when “interests are not articulated at all clearly or powerfully, decision-makers may be completely oblivious of them and quite unable to take them into account” (p237).

Unlike the African Caribbean community, Pakistanis did not participate in ‘the politics of protest’ (Dench, 1986, p172-3) which meant their case has not been properly articulated or in Newton’s words was “neglected, overlooked, ignored or denied” (p236). Pakistanis continued to be poorly represented at policy level. For example, when Birmingham Race Action Partnership (BRAP), the body whose role it was to promote equality for all groups in the city, was invited to give evidence on educational underachievement in Birmingham to the Select Committee on Education and Skills, (House of Commons, 2002), its chief officer, Joy Warmington, reported that Bangladeshi pupils were the main underachieving group, making no mention of Pakistanis. Consequently, in Birmingham, there was a belief expressed that the problem of Pakistani underachievement would sort itself. “Pakistani pupils will soon show rapid improvement as generational factors work through” (BSLC, 2001, p17).

There was occasional focus on Pakistani pupils (Rashid et al., 2005; BCC, 2009; BCC, 2010), including in partnership between the LA and the local *Anjuman Taraqqi-e-Urdu*, Society for the Advancement of Urdu, in order to facilitate Urdu teaching.

By the time I left my post as Adviser, in 2011, much of the LA's equality-related work in education had ceased and the Black and Pakistani staff, who would normally lead on such initiatives, were made redundant in response to funding cuts, leaving a handful of mainly White staff in post. While, the Council's Scrutiny Committee continued to receive reports (BCC, 2013) on who was underachieving in the local schools, beyond this, the authority appeared to lack the resources to take any action as schools now controlled much of the funding.

2.2.4 Back to colour-blind education policy

From the turn of the century the work in Birmingham began to take a colour-blind approach. Warren and Gillborn (2003) pointed out that “school improvement and effectiveness does not necessarily embody a meaningful concern with race equality. Research elsewhere (and Birmingham's own recent statistics) suggest that pursuing ‘effectiveness’ without a conscious and explicit focus on race equality will not narrow the ‘equality gap’” (p49). Indeed, Gillborn (2008a) has argued that unless a policy is consciously designed to challenge race inequalities, it is likely to reinforce those inequalities (p244). In his case study of Birmingham, Newton (1976) explained that a ‘neutral’ policy meant that discriminatory practices were given free rein. Warren and Gillborn (2003) also drew attention to an ‘implementation gap’. While the authority has made a “bold and important commitment to closing the existing ‘equality gap’, its schools are equally dominated by national initiatives and professional concerns and who have “promoted ‘improvement’ strategies that are known to detrimentally affect minority ethnic pupils” (p60).

As predicted (Brighouse, 2002), the funding system for LAs was used to reduce their role in education - as a strategic partner/planner, direct provider, quality assurer, broker, monitor and evaluator and disseminator of good practice (Fletcher-Campbell & Lee, 2003). Recently many of the Birmingham schools have left the LA, leading, according to Arthur (2015), to education becoming less a public service with little or no community accountability. He points out that where schools are “free of local accountability, then you are replacing the ethos of the local authority with some other political agenda” (p318). Here it is worth asking whether education has become a ‘dictatorship of the official’ (Newton, 1976) where salaried people such as headteachers are in-charge. Locally, this situation has been formalised in the establishment of the Birmingham Education Partnership (BEP). Now chaired by Baroness Estelle Morris, the Partnership sees headteachers taking on collective leadership of local education. However, this raises questions of democratic accountability and, in particular, to the Pakistani community. BEP now has become the ‘local authority’ and has the responsibility “to hold the reins on school improvement” (McKinney, 2016, p4)

Towards the end of my time as a Schools’ Adviser with Birmingham (2001-2011) I had been informed by senior colleagues that it was unnecessary to take targeted and differentiated approaches to addressing needs of particular underachieving groups. This had resulted from the policies of the then Coalition Government. In an email communication (Overington, 2012), I was informed that the “Coalition Government believes that every child can succeed with the right support and that no barrier should ever be allowed to hold a child back from fulfilling their potential.” It was pointed out that unlike the previous Government, who had “developed a number of centrally-driven, targeted interventions for Black and minority ethnic pupils – including one

aimed specifically at raising the attainment of Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Somali and Turkish Heritage pupils¹⁶, the current Government's approach to tackling inequality involved moving away from "treating people as groups or 'equality strands' in need of special treatment." Instead, the Government intended to act as a "catalyst for change by developing frameworks that will help create fairness and opportunities for *everyone* (my emphasis)." It was further pointed out that teachers and headteachers would take a stronger lead in tackling the underperformance of disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils.

The 'de-racialised' (Troyna, 1994) approach on educational inequalities is premised on the assumption that all pupils have the same contextual backgrounds and needs and omits issues such as ethnicity or racism from educational discourse and, instead, relies on the ethnocentric 'everyday world' of teachers. For Gillborn (1997) adopting such discourse removes from the policy agenda concerns for ethnic inequalities of achievement and opportunity. For Crozier (1999), this leads to ignoring the unequal terrain upon which different young people experience their education. "It also implies that all children are the same, with the same needs and desires...it ignores the heterogeneity of society ...and thus provides a justification for ignoring the politics of difference" (p86).

Gillborn (2008a) explained that colour-blind approach in education policy led to institutional racism¹⁷. "Because of the existing race inequalities in society, and because of

¹⁶ I was referred to this resource on the following web link: <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/pupilsupport/inclusionandlearnersupport/mea/a0013246/ethnic-minority-achievement>. However, on 8 January 2013, the resource was archived by the then current government. They had similarly done so with a wide range of resources which were produced by the outgoing Labour government.

¹⁷ Defined by Macpherson (1999) as: The collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture, or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage minority ethnic people.

the racist assumptions that most Whites bring into school, every single education policy is likely to impact on minoritized groups differently” (p244). Policies are, therefore, likely to have a disproportionately negative impact on particular groups, such as....Pakistani students. He goes on to point out that unless a policy is consciously interrogated for race equality impacts, it is likely to disadvantage minorities. This was supported by the DfEE (2000) who pointed out: “A colour blind approach can mean that factors important to the education of minority group pupils are overlooked” (p24). The importance of treating children *differently* was also stressed by the TTA (2000). It had advised ITT providers to enable teacher trainees to develop their understanding of the importance of an inclusive curriculum:

An inclusive education cannot be achieved by treating all pupils in the same way. To be effective, schooling has to take account of the often very varied life experiences, assumptions and interests of different pupils and different groups, including sometimes their differing responses to schooling itself.

Elsewhere, the guidance pointed out that not to acknowledge *difference* was racist; as it would encourage White children to think of their culture as superior and minority children to think they were “outside the ‘norm’ and therefore less acceptable and of less value” (p40).

As a part of the colour-blind approach one can see the recent use of the umbrella ‘Asian’ category. This hides Pakistani *underachievement* by including it with the higher achieving Indian pupils. Under the previous government (DCSF, 2007 - SFR/38) it was pointed out that “...Pakistani pupils perform below the national average across all Key Stages” (p2). They were reported to be 9 percentage points behind the national average for 5+ A*-C grades at GCSE, including English and mathematics. A similar picture was

presented later (DCSF, 2009 – SFR 34). Here, Pakistani pupils were reported to have an attainment gap of 7.8 percentage points. This was supported by Strand (2007) who pointed out that, alongside their Black and Bangladeshi counterparts, “Pakistani pupils consistently achieve lower examination scores than White British” (p13). However, under the Coalition government it has been reported (DfE, 2012 - SFR 03): “Pupils from an Asian background performed above the national average” (p3). SFR 05 (DfE, 2014) and SFR 06 (DfE, 2015) make a similar statement.

2.2.5 Funding for ethnic minority pupils

The different systems of funding for minority pupils also help us to understand government approaches to educational policy. Under Section 11¹⁸ LAs were supported in their work with ethnic minority pupils. This was later rebranded as Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG) and its scope was widened to the raising of achievement of minority ethnic groups (Tikly et al., 2005). The funding was ring-fenced, to be spent specifically on the pupils concerned. A minimum of 85% of the funds were devolved to schools ((Jones & Wallace 2001; Arnot et al., 2014). DFES (2003) consulted LAs and then issued guidance (DFES, 2004) advising LAs to embed minority underachievement within the school-improvement systems. The guidance recommended that there should be clear strategies for enhancing the achievement of minority ethnic pupils and that this should be “undertaken in a context where issues of equality and diversity are central to the school's basic systems and processes” (p8). It encouraged the development of links between schools and their communities. “In particular, sharing of experience and knowledge between mainstream and supplementary schools can bring significant and mutual benefits to both, e.g. through better cultural awareness, curriculum enrichment and coordinated support in and out of school that focuses on the needs of the child” (p 11).

¹⁸ Of the Local Government Act 1966

For a number of years Birmingham accessed substantial EMAG funding¹⁹. The centrally held part of this was spent on schemes such as the MERITT (Minority Ethnic Recruitment in Initial Teacher Training) scheme and raising achievement initiatives. Under the Coalition government, EMAG was absorbed into the Dedicated School Grant (DSG). This was explained to me in an email (Overington, 2012):

In relation to schools, Ministers are clear that teachers and headteachers should take a stronger lead in tackling the underperformance of disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils. That is why... the Government decided to mainstream ...Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant - into schools' own budgets. Schools now have the freedom to spend it themselves, in whichever way they feel will have the greatest effect.

Here it is worth pointing out that in Wales, there has continued to be specific funding for ethnic minority children (Welsh Government 2014, p2).

In order to respond to the needs of disadvantaged pupils, the Coalition Government decided to pay schools a Pupil Premium, on the basis of the numbers of FSM children. According to Chowdry et al., (2010), the FSM indicator was chosen because schools would not be able to manipulate it to gain a financial advantage. However, they pointed out that there are other indicators which could be considered, such as having EAL or belonging to a low-achieving ethnic group. Chowdry and Sibieta (2010) suggested that low attainment at KS2 was another possible lever to redirect funding towards secondary schools whose pupils were low achievers at primary school. According to Carpenter et

¹⁹ £9,110,045 in 2004 (BCC 2004)

al. (2013), schools used their freedom to target pupils they deemed to be most in need, such as those who were EAL.

2.2.6 Pakistanis not the only underachieving group – limitations of educational policy interventions

While drawing attention to the needs of Pakistani children and the lack of policy intervention, it is worth acknowledging that they are not the only underachieving group. Furthermore it is worth asking what impact education policy might have. Here, it is worth looking at the situation of the White working class young people, a group with whose needs I acquired some familiarity through my earlier work (Iqbal, 2010). As a large group who have historically underachieved nationally, their needs have been the subject of policy interventions, which have met with little success as their underachievement continues to persist as reported in House of Commons (2014). They pointed out: “The possible causes and contributions to white working class underachievement are many and various, and include matters in home life, school practices, and wider social policies” (p3). So this raises the question whether education policy intervention would be equally limited when addressing Pakistani underachievement.

2.3 Social class and its impact

Socio-economic status (SES) has been found to be strongly associated with educational achievement (Blanden & Gregg 2004). For Feinstein (2004), social class impacts on attainment levels, not as a one-off effect prior to school entry but a compounding effect throughout school life. Human development is said to arise from a dynamic interplay between the proximal (individual) level characteristics and the distal (wider) environmental forces (Georgiades & Mustard, 2007; Schoon et al., 2002). This points to

a need for making interventions at both of these levels when addressing low achievement. Brady-Smith et al. (undated) identified family income and the provision of a stimulating home learning environment as pathways through which poverty affects children's educational outcomes. For them a child from a well-off family would be more likely to grow up surrounded by learning resources. He²⁰ is more likely to have friends whose homes similarly have such resources and is likely to form the opinion that such resource availability is normal. A poorer child on the other hand is more likely to grow up with few such resources. Brady-Smith et al. argued that given the provision of a stimulating home environment may be the most important pathway through which poverty operates. For Strand (2012; 2014b) socio-economic disadvantage may have a direct influence on children's development such as through limited material resources and an indirect influence operating through parental education, expectations and aspirations. Sirin (2005) pointed out that parents' SES has a strong impact on students' academic achievement. It determines the students' academic performance both by directly providing resources at home and by indirectly providing the social capital that is necessary to succeed in school. Family SES also determines the kind of school the student attends. The question is thus raised here as to how far should the problems Pakistani boys face be seen as one of social class.

The influential PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) analysis shows that an achievement gap between rich and poor pupils exists in many countries (OECD, 2010). They pointed out that although poor educational achievement does not automatically follow from low SES, the SES of students and schools does appear to have a powerful influence on performance. They also point out that SES disadvantage

²⁰ I would normally use inclusive language but given my focus on boys, I have not done so in places.

has many facets and cannot be ameliorated by education policy alone, much less in the short term.

According to the DCSF (2009a), disadvantaged pupils fall behind from the early years; the social class gap in attainment opens up by 22 months. This can lead to an ongoing cycle of under-performance; some never catch up with their peers. “No matter what their starting point, disadvantaged pupils are less likely to make two levels of progress between key stages than their more advantaged peers with the same prior attainment” (DCSF, 2009b, p18).

A lack of family income could prevent disadvantaged children from gaining access to educational activities if expensive fees are required. Furthermore, poorer parents may lack awareness of neighbourhood resources. Indeed, the absence of supportive social networks could undermine the motivation of disadvantaged families to access resources even if they involved no financial cost (Georgiades & Mustard, 2007). Schools serving poor communities are likely to need more funding than their counterparts in wealthier areas (Sirin, 2005).

Conversely, higher SES children may have certain advantages. They may have educated parents who invest more of their time and energy into educating their children. Wealthier families can also provide more educational resources at home and be surrounded by a more resourced community context. Furthermore, according to OECD (2010), “schools with a higher average socio-economic background among their students are likely to have advantages such as fewer discipline problems, better teacher-student relations, higher teacher morale, and a general school climate that is oriented

towards higher performance” (p92). Such schools are often able to attract, and retain for longer, more talented and motivated teachers.

In the UK, SES is frequently measured by children’s eligibility for free school meals (FSM). This depends upon their parents’ receipt of certain benefits such as income support. According to Strand (2014), in secondary schools in England, 11% of White British students were FSM compared to 30% of Pakistanis. A higher proportion of Pakistani students (60% as opposed to 20% White British) are said to suffer from multiple deprivation (DCSF, 2009a). This is measured by attendance at a deprived school (which has more than 30% FSM pupils) and living in a highly deprived area (where more than 45% of children are in families in receipt of benefit).

The Pakistani community continues to suffer from a number of disadvantages (EHRC, 2011; Iqbal, 2013). According to the DFES, disadvantage has a very real impact on educational attainment (Bhattacharyya et al. 2003), especially on Pakistani young people. Gillborn and Mirza (2000) showed that social class was a significant factor in educational achievement. It is, therefore, necessary to explore whether social class is a factor affecting Pakistani boys’ education.

2.3.1 Differential impact amongst minorities

Ethnic minorities have been said to be differentially affected by poverty, both generally and in relation to education (Sirin, 2005). They have been found to ‘weather’ economic disadvantage much better when compared with their White British peers and, therefore, less susceptible to low achievement (Kingdon & Cassen, 2010). They saw education as worthwhile and a way out of poverty. They had higher aspirations (Strand & Winston, 2008 and sometimes, in addition, greater support and encouragement for education (Kapadia, 2010. For Burgess (2014), low SES ethnic minority children did better than

their similarly disadvantaged White peers as a result of advantages which were less material - than books, educational visits and computers. Strand (2014) similarly identified a number of factors which could statistically account for the higher attainment and greater progress of most ethnic minority groups from low SES backgrounds (relative to low SES White British students): parental and student educational aspirations to continue in education beyond the compulsory school leaving age, high academic self concept, high level of homework and low truancy and exclusion. For him, this offered encouragement in policy terms since these, more proximal, factors are easier to impact than the more structural factors underlying the SES variable. However, he cautioned that this did not indicate any 'quick fix' but points to areas where intervention programmes might focus, earlier in students' school careers, to have the best chance of impacting on achievement at end of schooling.

It has been pointed out that high aspirations alone are not enough; what matters is that they are accompanied by opportunities to enable the children to realise their aspirations (St. Clair & Benjamin, 2011). Working class and poorer parents such as a significant number of Pakistanis are not in a position to provide such opportunities as they do not possess the 'capital' (Abbas, 2004). For Flouri (2006), parental aspirations functioned differently across ethnicity and SES. In high SES groups, parents' aspirations were related to children's attainment but not in low SES contexts. In the latter situation, while young people may aspire to do well it may not make much difference to their achievement. The reason given for this was parents' lack of capability in helping their children with school work. This suggests that high aspirations have to be accompanied by appropriate opportunities, if they are to deal with barriers associated with disadvantage. In the context of my research, while accepting that Pakistani youngsters

may have high aspirations it is worth asking whether they have the necessary opportunities to help them to realise those aspirations.

2.3.2 Different parenting strategies

Parental social class, as mediated by their cultural outlook, is said to predict outcomes for their children's education. It is a subject that requires a more nuanced consideration. Different parents will no doubt employ differing parenting strategies, which then impact on their children's education. Such strategies may be determined by social class or ethnicity. Lareau (2002) pointed out that parents' SES predicted children's school success and life chances. She showed the influence of social class on parenting styles and demonstrated that parents differed by class in the ways they intervened in their children's development which in turn differentially impacted on educational attainment. The middle-class parents, both White and Black, conformed to a cultural logic of childrearing, referred to as "concerted cultivation." They enrolled their children in organised activities which would transmit important life skills to children. The 'cultivation' approach employed by middle class parents provided a wider range of experiences for children. On the other hand, the childrearing strategies of both White and Black working-class parents emphasised the 'accomplishment of natural growth'. These parents believed that as long as they met the basic needs of their children the children would grow and thrive. It raises the question whether this is enough. These parents did not focus on developing their children's special talents which is what is often needed in our competitive world.

Elsewhere, Lareau (2003) pointed out that, compared to the middle-class children, working-class children participated in few organised activities. "The middle-class strategy of concerted cultivation appears to have greater promise of being capitalized into social profits than does the strategy of the accomplishment of natural growth found

in working-class and poor homes” (p244). It could be argued that there is perhaps a problem with the middle class cultivation approach, given that it places a pressure on both the parents and their children.

While working class children were instructed to defer to adults, middle class children developed a sense that their opinions matter and that adults should respond to their needs, even by adjusting situations. Lareau (2003) pointed out that working class children had less living space in the house and little privacy. Whatever space there was, they shared it with other family members. She pointed out that the difference in parenting strategies was made by social class, not race; the Black middle class used identical strategies to their White counterparts. It is possible that some of Lareau's findings would be applicable to Pakistani-British families.

Crozier and Davies (2007) found that professional Pakistani parents were more active in their children's education. However, a number of the parents pointed out that their children's schools had stereotypical and racist opinions of them. They also commented that some of the social events organised by the schools for parents were culturally inappropriate. Archer (2010) concluded that the minority ethnic middle-class may hold similar beliefs and engage in similar practices as White parents (which produce advantage), thus confirming Lareau (2003). These included feeling a sense of entitlement²¹ (that the school would accommodate their child's needs); feeling confident and comfortable at voicing their concerns with authority figures and going as high in the hierarchy as necessary to resolve any issues. Archer did, however, point out that the ethnic minority middle class were still subject to racial inequalities. Some of this class and race-centred data may provide a backdrop to my research.

²¹ This is sometimes used disparagingly. However, this is not my intention.

2.4 Protective factors for Pakistanis

It could be argued that, perhaps what helps Pakistani young people, in spite of their disadvantaged context, are a number of protective factors and attitudes and behaviours that are found in their community. According to the DFES (2006), Pakistani students were most likely of all pupil groups, at 94.4%, to state that school work was worth doing; the figure for White British was 92.8%. They similarly were most likely to state, at 91.7%, that they worked as hard as they could at school; compared to 80.4% of White British. Could this provide a basis for further improvement in raising their attainment levels? Strand (2011) also drew attention to the high level of progress at secondary school made by Indian students, due to a number of 'advantaging factors', - completing homework five evenings a week; having a home computer; least likely to truant and least likely to have been excluded from school. Could they provide a model for the Pakistanis to emulate?

2.4.1 Ethnicity and 'immigrant' as a resource

A number of writers have pointed out that education is highly valued amongst ethnic minorities due to what has been defined variously as the 'immigrant paradigm', 'immigrant mentality' and 'the immigrant bargain' (Caplan et al., 1991; Zhou & Bankston III, 1994; Kao & Thompson, 2003; Winder 2004; Francis & Archer, 2005; Luthra 2010). This is where immigrant parents, who struggled for success in their new country, made sure that they would do all they could to enable their children to succeed. Joly (1986), in her research amongst Birmingham Pakistanis found that the parents had brought with them from Pakistan a value for education which they considered as the medium for social mobility and self-improvement. They did not want their children to follow in their footsteps, into labouring jobs. Unsurprisingly, the parents expressed a high level of respect for education and teachers. They explained that, as Muslims, their religion taught them to respect teachers, who were seen as 'spiritual parents'. Modood et al. (1994)

pointed out that British Asians gave high priority to academic success, which they saw as a way of achieving economic success. “This desire to see their children succeed was strongly influenced by their own lack of opportunities in education and their wish that their children should not have to suffer the discrimination, disadvantage and lack of job security they themselves had faced in employment in the 1960s and 1970s” (p53).

Crozier and Davies (2007) had also found the parents to place a high value on education.

Modood (2004) pointed out that for the Pakistanis their ethnicity formed a resource which led to disadvantaged families producing graduates. Shah et al. (2010) found evidence of shared beliefs and values about the importance of education. The young Pakistanis interviewed believed education was very important to succeed in life, and stated that their parents emphasised the value of education. The parents, irrespective of their own education or background, were acutely aware of the status higher education would confer on the family. It will be necessary to explore whether education is still valued by the parents and whether its importance is communicated to their sons. Basit (2013a) found high aspirations amongst the Asian parents and grandparents, including those who lacked full understanding of the educational process.

The Pakistani community has been shown to have a unique heritage and strengths (Anwar 1979; Shaw 1988; Werbner 1990). Bourdieu described such resources as capital (Anheier et al. 1995). In particular, he identified three general types of capital: economic, cultural and social. The first, economic, refers to monetary income as well as other financial resources. Cultural capital is said to exist in long-standing dispositions and habits acquired in the socialisation process. The third type of capital, social, is the sum of the actual and potential resources that can be mobilised through membership in

social networks. Communities can differ in the amount of each capital they possess. Some may have all three while others may have more of one capital and less of another. While Pakistanis may be short on economic capital but may have plenty of cultural and social capital, including that which the wider society may not recognise nor indeed value. Werbner (1990) categorised the capital the community possessed as 'Pakistani capital' (similar to Lareau & Horvat's (1999) 'White cultural capital' - where being White places individuals at an advantage), which they used to evade the impact of institutional racism. It is possible that Pakistani pupils' achievement is helped by such capital within the community in the form of its values and networks which promote particular educational goals (Putnam, 2000; Dwyer et al., 2006). Yosso (2005) spoke of capital in the plural which may help us to identify the resources of the Pakistani community. For example, she spoke of linguistic capital which Pakistani young people develop and learn to use from an early age (Robertson, 2006). They also have, what Rex and Tomlinson (1979) described, the skill of being 'culturally bilingual'.

2.4.2 Importance of religion

Different from the mainstream society where religion is not generally seen to be important, Islam has been found to have a significant presence amongst Pakistani young people and their families. For the Muslim Council of Britain (MCB) (2007) Islam is an important reference point for Muslim children. MCB advised schools that they should, therefore, take a positive account of this dimension of Muslim young people. "The faith of Muslim pupils should be seen as an asset to addressing constructively many of the issues that young people face today, including educational failure..." (p17).

A number of studies had shown religion to be important for Pakistani Muslims. The DFES (2006) reported nearly all the Pakistani pupils as Muslim, for whom their religion was very or fairly important. For Chattoo et al. (2004) significance of religion amongst

Pakistani young people and their families was 'beyond debate' (p24). "Indeed, passing on religious values to their children was defined as an important aspect of filial duty, a prerequisite for good parenting, by parents, grandparents as well as the young people themselves" (p24). Sahin (2005) also confirmed the importance of religion and Birmingham's Pakistani students. He concluded that Islam remained an important factor structuring their lives. Majority of the students held very high positive attitudes toward Islam. Research in Peterborough (Davies, 2016 email) showed that nearly all the students who stated that their religion was Islam were actively practising their faith. Basit (2009) reported that for many Muslim young people, their religious identity was paramount. Francis and Robins (2014) found a clear association between faith affiliation and purpose in life, especially for Muslim young people. Earlier, Abbas (2004) had found that all Asian Muslim students in Birmingham had viewed their religion with greater commitment, both inside of school hours and outside.

Dwyer et al. (2006) spoke of 'religion as social capital' which gave the young people strong impetus to perform well academically. They found that religion encouraged their subjects to both conform to parental norms and values and actively constructed their own values which saw education as an appropriate Islamic activity. Consequently, their religious commitment kept them engaged in their studies. Shah et al. (2010) reported that, for the young people in their study, Islam acted as a driver for educational achievement and shaped their attitudes and values, orienting them towards normative patterns of study and work. Franceschelli and O'Brian (2014) spoke of 'Islamic capital', which they defined 'as a body of convertible resources originating from Islam and used by parents as support for their children's upbringing'. They found parents reporting that religion strengthened them as a family, such as through praying together.

Smith (2003) concluded that religion provides young people standards to guide their life practices. It does so by providing them with moral direction, inter-generational role models, access to alternative sources of cultural capital and community links. He concluded that the more the young people were able to access religious influences and capitalise on this resource, the more it positively influenced their life's outcomes. Iannaconne (1990) argued that the community and leadership skills learnt by young people through religious participation enhanced the overall capital of young people which benefited them throughout life. If religion is as important for Pakistani young people as has been shown then this might offer a possible resource in the educational setting.

A number of researchers have pointed to the link between religious participation and educational achievement. It led to higher self-esteem (Markstrom, 1999), was an important predictor of higher attainment (Brown & Gary, 1991; Regnerus, 2000; Erickson & Phillips, 2012). Byfield (2008) identified the positive impact of prayer for her subjects through the development of character and values and through the general pro-education culture of their church. She found their Church gave her subjects access to a strong personal, social and community identity. Could there be a similar impact of participation in religious activities for Pakistani students?

It has been pointed out (Coleman, 1988; Smith, 2003a) that religion had the greatest impact on young people where they received the same messages from their school, the church and the wider community, what has been referred to as 'closure'. Markstrom's (1999) had similarly pointed out that churches achieved the positive outcome for the young people concerned in partnership with religious families and the wider community. I had experienced such 'closure' as a child, where the worlds of my family and school, in

Kashmir, cohered with each other and which helped to ‘join-up’ my home and school lives. Is such a situation possible for Pakistani boys, so they have closure in their lives? It points to a need for greater collaboration between school, home and the mosque for the Pakistani students. Could ways be found to ‘join-up’ their worlds and reduce the discontinuities in their lives so that they receive the same messages from parents, at the mosque and teachers at their state school?

2.5 Factors impacting on Pakistani education

A child's educational development is influenced by a complex range of factors, including their individual characteristics, the wider family environment, the neighbourhood where they live and the schools they attend (Clifton & Cook, 2012). Within this context, home and school are the main domains of their lives. They spend about fifteen percent of their time at school; the rest is spent at home and the community (BCC, 2004b). School is said to add about 14 - 20 per cent to the statistical explanation of pupil achievement; with the rest attributable to pupil-level factors (Cassen & Kingdon, 2010; Rasbash et al., 2010). In order to gain a better understanding of Pakistani boys’ education and in particular their achievement relative to their White peers, I will explore these two main domains of their lives.

2.5.1 Home factors

In discussing educational achievement of ethnic minority pupils, it is sometimes assumed that length of time the pupils had been in the UK may be a factor in how well they did at school. However, this according to Strand et al. (2010) is no longer an issue amongst children born in the UK. I expect the same would be the case for Pakistani pupils in my research given my focus is on those born in the UK.

A related area is pupils' competency in the English language which is sometimes assumed to be a disadvantaging factor. However, being EAL is not a significant factor by the end of compulsory schooling, which is where my focus is. The DFES (2005a) found EAL pupils to be only 3 percentage points behind their EFL (English as First Language) peers in their achievement of 5+ A*-C GCSE. Later evidence (Strand et al., 2010; Strand, 2015) has pointed to an almost non-existent gap at age 16 arising out of pupils' language. For Strand and Demie (2005) having EAL may actually be an advantage, as the pupils bring to their learning a range of skills, knowledge and understanding in their first language which aids their acquisition of English.

2.5.2 Prior attainment

While my research focus is on secondary age pupils, it is worth recognising that some of the problems of underachievement have their origins much earlier in pupils' life course. It has been pointed out that prior low attainment is a particular problem for FSM pupils; they are behind their non-FSM peers from early on in their schooling and stay behind in later stages (DCSF, 2009a). Strand (2011) showed Pakistanis with the lowest attainment, of all ethnic groups, at primary school, in the test results in English and science and second lowest in maths.

2.6 The wider meaning of education for Pakistanis

It has been pointed out that Pakistani parents value education and wish to exploit its fullest potential for their children (Joly, 1986; Modood, et al., 1994). But does it mean that they desire exactly the same education on offer to White children in the British context. Brighouse (2005), Chief Education Officer for Birmingham, pointed out that it was to be expected that elders in any society would seek to ensure their young learn those skills that will enable them and their society to survive and thrive. They hoped too that the young will carry on the beliefs that underpin their culture and acquire the

learning that extends the knowledge which their society values. Halstead (1986) pointed out that Muslim parents (such as the Pakistanis) had two aims for education of their children. Firstly, they wanted to gain the maximum benefit from the education on offer in the state system and, secondly, they wished to preserve, maintain and transmit their distinctive Islamic beliefs and values, both through direct teaching and (ideally) through a school ethos informed by those values. He explained that some parents gave priority to the secular education leaving the Islamic education to be dealt with at home and in the mosque, while others wished for both aims to be integrated into one education. However, what the latter group of parents wished for was that the education offered in state schools should be “given a distinct religious flavour and brought into harmony with Muslim beliefs” (p367). Later, Khan-Cheema (1994) had similarly pointed out that while the education system in a pluralist society cannot provide a fully Islamic education, one can expect it to be in harmony with Islamic principles. Interestingly, Swann (1985, p509) had pointed out that if schools followed their advice and accommodated religious education needs of Muslim children then this would go a considerable way towards meeting the concerns of many ethnic minority parents about their children's education.

Based on her research amongst a mainly Pakistani community, Basit (1995) reported that parents saw Islamic belief as a living legacy that had to be passed on to their children. This was something that was not just a priority for the fully practising Muslims; all Muslims felt it to be their duty, to transfer Islam to their children (Franceschelli & O'Brian (2014).

Nelson's (2006) came to the same conclusion as Halstead (1986). However, his research was conducted in Pakistan, amongst parents in and around Rawalpindi. He found the

parents wanting both *deeni* and *dunyawi*, 'religious' and 'of the world', education respectively. They were keen that both should be provided in an integrated manner within schools.

2.6.1 Islamic idea of education

Education from an Islamic perspective is seen as multi-dimensional; it focuses on the Arabic concepts of talim, tarbiyah and tadib (Hussain, 2004; Anderson et al. 2011; Yasin & Jani, 2013). All three dimensions are essential to the complete task of educating young people. Talim means to know and to learn. Knowledge is one of the basic covenants of Islam and acquiring knowledge is a religious priority for Muslims, a duty imposed by God (Hossain, 1979; Shah, 2012; Yasin & Jani, 2013). Tarbiya is concerned with growth and development in order to reach the stage of maturity. It involves presenting to the students certain values - of goodness, truth and honesty - until they are woven into the fabric of personality. The teacher is considered to be both one who has knowledge as well as one who trains the personality. The third term, tadib, focuses on becoming cultured, well mannered and disciplined. It describes good social behaviour. Shah et al. (2010) sum up the meaning of education for Muslims as follows (p1115):

Education is not just to get a good job, education makes you a good citizen, a good person, part of the society, if you're educated ... you always try to do the better things, you communicate better, you speak better, this is good for society.

For Mabud (1992), belief in God was central to the Islamic notion of education. For him education was for the total growth and development of human beings and education which did not provide an awareness of God was incomplete. For Ashraf (1986), an authority on Islamic education (Ahmed, 1998), "education should aim at the balanced growth of the total personality of Man... (It) should cater therefore for the growth of Man in all its aspects: spiritual, intellectual, imaginative, physical, scientific,

linguistic” (p4). Elsewhere he (Ashraf, 1979) distinguished education from instruction and explained that the former helped in the complete growth of an individual's personality whereas instruction merely trained him in the efficient performance of given tasks. A human being may be highly proficient in a number of tasks but may at the same time be cruel or who deliberately ignores his duty towards neighbours or family. For him such a person could be said to be a well-instructed individual but not truly educated. For Ashraf, central to being educated Islamically was what it means to be human; in both this and the next world. Others (Badawi, 1979; Anderson et al., 2011) pointed out that formation of moral character and behaviour were central to Islamic education; not merely acquiring knowledge but being morally transformed by it.

Coles (2013) brought together a number of education experts with longstanding experience of working in Birmingham. The list included Professor Mick Waters, Dr. John Lloyd, Gilroy Brown, Nargis Rashid and the Rev'd Jackie Hughes, Diocesan Director of Education, in Birmingham. Between them they agreed that:

‘...an education service must have an overarching teleological vision, a sense of what an educated person should look like after...years of compulsory schooling. This vision must be translated into a series of clear and explicit values which underpin the notion of an educated person (p11).

2.6.2 Role of the Pakistani family

Pakistani young people generally grow up in a mainly collectivist culture where the distinction between the individual and the group is blurred (Bochner, 1994) and where they are able to benefit from their family's social capital (Khattab, 2003). The social capital acts as a channel for the transmission of parents' values, norms and expectations to their children. For Basit (2013a), the social and cultural capitals amongst Asian

families helped to propel their youngsters towards educational success where they were able to acquire educational capital. She found that education meant more to parents than its economic worth. It was seen as making the young people a good human being.

Thapar-Bjorkert & Sanghera (2010) found the parents using their own experiences of hardship, in the UK, to transmit the importance of education to their offspring. The older siblings “became important *role models*” (original italics) (p255), given that they, having been brought up in the same environment as the respondents, had become successful. They took on roles such as responding to school letters and reports and checking homework. Williams & Gregory (2001) presented siblings as a resource, who acted as a bridge between the school and home literacies and who interpreted the discourses, values and practices of the school and combined them with the practices within the home. Basit (1995; 2013) also saw siblings as a resource who helped the young people to make informed choices about education. Moreover, she pointed to the whole extended family as an important resource, who between them were able to stress on the young people the importance of education.

Ritchie et al. (2005) and Buchanan (2006) highlighted barriers to the take-up of educational opportunities due to the parents’ lack of understanding of the education system. Here members of the extended family stepped in (Crozier & Davies, 2006). For example, older cousins might attend school events in place of parents. “Thus the social capital offered by the extended family... compensated for parents’ low educational and human capital” (Thapar & Sanghera, 2010, p19). I can add to this a personal example. When my nephew moved to Sixth Form College, neither of his parents felt confident to attend his Parents’ Evenings. So I stepped in. For Crozier and Davies (2006), the Asian family was an untapped educational resource; “the extended family has the potential to

be employed in the enhancing of the children's academic achievement if this resource were recognised and harnessed by the school, and inducted into educational knowledge” (p693). In the present research I will explore the meaning of education with Pakistani parents and the messages they give to their children in this respect.

2.7 Supplementary education

Amongst most immigrant groups, it is common to see additional provision of education for their young people beyond the school day and during holidays (Maylor et al., 2010). The response of Pakistanis in this respect was the development of madrassahs – which Rashid et al. (2006) characterised as supplementary schools for the Muslim community, set up to deliver Islamic education in order to preserve religious, cultural and linguistic identities. They are said to have a particular focus on learning of the Quran. They operate either from local mosques, community centres or in people’s homes. Such madrassahs have been in existence since the early days of post-war Pakistani migration to the UK (Hiro, 1971; Dahya, 1973; Khan, 1977; Anwar, 1979; Taylor & Hegarty, 1985).

As elsewhere, Pakistanis in Birmingham developed a cultural and religious infrastructure which included madrassahs (Chishti, 2008). Rex and Moore (1967) found the Pakistani parents' desire for their children to retain their home culture, their language and religion. Hashmi (1973), in his study of Pakistanis in the Saltley area of the city, pointed out that parallel with starting school Pakistani children would also be sent to the local mosque, where they “spend one to two hours learning the Islamic way of prayer, the basis of Islam and also reading and writing in Urdu” (p6). Later, Joly (1986) reported the same community wishing for their heritage to be maintained through such supplementary provision. The parents had high regard for state education. However, they were also

intent on preserving their own culture and religion and were eager to ensure cultural and religious continuity. "The overwhelming majority of families had arranged for their children to study Urdu either in the mosque, or in a house taught by a relative or friend..." (p13). The parents reported that all the children were learning the Quran (in Arabic). They also pointed out that the supplementary education was inadequate and placed a burden on the children and a large majority, 66%, were in favour of the children being taught to read the Quran at school. Those who were opposed to this explained that they were "wary of initiatives which would entrust the teaching of Qur'an to a non-Muslim teacher. In their eyes, the Qur'an must only be taught by a well-qualified bona fide Muslim" (p23). An even higher number, 97%, were in favour of Urdu being taught at school. The parents wished for their heritage to be respected by the education system and for it to be included in the curriculum. In their view this would remove some of the ignorance and prejudice amongst the White pupils. "They should be taught (Pakistani culture), so there would be a better understanding; if they know our culture and our ways, there wouldn't be as much hatred as there is now" (p22).

Cherti and Bradley (2011) outlined the recent picture of madrassah provision, including in Birmingham. They found there were around 2000 madrassahs, attended by around 250,000 Muslim children across the UK. The focus of madrassahs was on the Quran and Islamic education, with a significant number also teaching languages such as Arabic and Urdu.

2.7.1 Funding of supplementary schooling

Supplementary schools are generally funded through fees from the children. However, within Birmingham, the LA, for a number of years, provided funding for community-run supplementary schools. On one occasion 111 such schools were funded, majority

Pakistani-run. The then Chief Education Officer, Tim Brighouse explained that the purpose of this support was to enhance the educational opportunities for children; recognise the significance of community language and its relationship to educational achievement and support the development of cultural awareness that can demonstrate a direct link with educational achievement (BCC, 2000a). The funding support continued for a number of years (BCC, 2001; 2002; 2003c). Maylor et al. (2010) reported that, in the financial year 2003-2004, Birmingham LA had spent £191,910 for this purpose. This was to cover tutor fees, equipment, material costs and rent. A national example of funding of supplementary schools was through the establishment of the National Resource Centre for Supplementary Education²².

Beyond the UK, Berglund (2015) has provided examples of funding support for Islamic Religious Education. In Finland it is argued that IRE helps students to become knowledgeable about their origins, with a strong sense of personal identity. This is said to create solid Finnish citizens that can contribute to social cohesion in unique and meaningful ways. They have published books about Muslims which are set in a Finnish environment. Within Sweden, a number of Muslim organisations receive financial support that can be used to sponsor their own Islamic instruction classes which have a focus on Qur'an studies and Islamic history. In some schools, Quranic recitation is taught as part of IRE. The curriculum sets out to connect the 'macro' world of Islamic history to the 'micro' world of the pupils. Of particular interest are those narratives which help to reinforce the values of modern-day Swedish society, such as, the importance of generosity and good neighbourliness.

²² (www.supplementaryeducation.org.uk).

2.7.2 Positive outcomes of supplementary schools

For Francis et al. (2009), there are diverse benefits of supplementary education, including space to negotiate identities; transmission and celebration of aspects of ‘culture’; ‘space’ from racism; and additional education (in community language and/or other subjects and skills). Hall et al. (2002) reported madrassahs provided for the students opportunities to learn, to socialise and belong. Students found that attendance at these schools was a way of reclaiming their cultural and social identity, something they felt they could not achieve at mainstream school. Hall et al. conclude:

“The most striking message, then, from our evidence is that the supplementary school imbues its participants with a sense of belonging to a community that supports them practically, culturally, socially, emotionally and spiritually....support through strong ethnic identity and community attachment” (p410).

From the Pakistani community’s perspective, the long-term benefit of such supplementary education is the transmission of their religion to the younger generation. This has been reported to be of importance even to those parents who were not fully practising but who still felt the duty of transferring Islam to their children (Franceschelli & O'Brian 2014). It would appear that such transmission of their religion is successful with reference to Islam when compared with other communities (Scourfield et al., 2012).

In 2007, the DFES funded the Madrassah Literacy Project run by QED-UK, a multi-purpose CBO (community-based organisation) (Adger, 2001)²³ serving the Pakistani community in Bradford (Stewart et al., 2009; Cherti et al., 2011). The project helped to create a dialogue between madrassahs and schools. It was initiated in order to foster

²³ These are organisations “that are committed to helping people obtain health, education and other basic human services” (Adger, 2001, p8). A multipurpose CBO is one that provides more than one programme.

understanding between different communities and to improve levels of literacy and overall educational attainment of ethnic minority pupils. In 2009, an Open Madrassah Network was developed by Bradford Council. The programme paid local, qualified teachers to teach booster classes for 'borderline' primary and GCSE students in four Muslim supplementary schools. It also gave pupils the opportunity to study for GCSEs in Arabic, Urdu and religious education.

Shah et al. (2010) reported on the work of the Pakistani community in Slough which had set up a homework club. This had been started by middle class members of the community for their working class co-ethnics. It was staffed by volunteers including university and secondary school students. It was explained that the provision was set up "to provide children with supplementary education and to provide working class children with some of the extra educational tuition which more middle-class parents 'buy'" (p1118).

There appears to be a lack of published research on the impact of supplementary schools, such as on improvements in attainments (Strand, 2007a). A Bristol project, aimed at Muslim children, was reported to have made significant impact on the attainment of pupils (Maylor et al., 2010). In addition to academic achievement, improved behaviour and a commitment by pupils to their studies was noted. Furthermore, staff attitudes, in terms of raised expectations of the pupils and improved relations with parents were also listed as an outcome of the supplementary provision. Strand (2007a) had found that more than eighty per cent of pupils reported that attending supplementary school helped them with their mainstream schoolwork.

2.7.3 Problems with Muslim supplementary education

A number of researchers have identified problems with the madrassah system.

Richardson and Wood (2004) quoted teachers saying that madrassah attendance had had a deleterious effect on work during school time, and consequently on levels of attainment. Cherti and Bradley (2011) found madrassah provision to compare unfavourably with the state system. Only 14% were found to require their teachers to have QTS (Qualified Teacher Status). The imams were “found to not be up to speed with current educational thinking and practices” (p12) as a majority had received their training outside the UK. “This is seen as problematic...particularly because large numbers of UK congregants of mosques and madrassahs are now British-born and may not be responsive to the language and ideas of spiritual leaders hired from overseas” (p12). They reported some participants in their research raising concerns about the role of madrassahs in reinforcing differences between British and Muslim identities. Mogra (2007) pointed out that within madrassahs “curriculum development has generally taken a back seat...” (p390).

The Institute of Islamic Scholars was reported (Lewis, 2006) as saying: “the student, after spending a good part of the day at (state) school, comes exhausted both mentally and physically to the *madrassah*. If the teacher then conducts his lesson without preparation, planning or using relevant methods, how would that then capture the imagination, attention and hearts of the students” (p174). Lewis also referred to the poor pay and job security of the imams, the mosque leaders, who deliver madrassah teaching. Earlier Halstead (1986) had identified a number of shortcomings in the madrassah provision: additional financial burden on the community and academic burden on the pupils; their approach and methods and inadequate premises, unqualified teachers, corporal punishment and rote -learning. Elsewhere, he reported (Halstead,

2005) schools complaining that their Pakistani students spent far too much time at their ‘mosque school’. Taj (1996), commenting on the Pakistani community in Bradford, pointed out that while IRE had the potential for being a force for good, this would not be realised if teaching was not accompanied by guidance in a language which the children could understand. "It is equally important that supplementary religious education is provided with the interests of the child as paramount, all too often it is conducted at the convenience of the providers, during the school week, leaving pupils tired and unresponsive to their wider education" (p8). According to the Association of Muslim Social Scientists (AMSS, 2004), participation in supplementary education can be stressful for the children “some of whom spend seven days a week attending schools of various descriptions or who study in the evening when other children are relaxing at home with their parents. Parents too suffer, transporting their children between two schools and bearing various extra costs” (p35). In Birmingham, Rashid et al. (2005) pointed out that, while for Pakistani boys attending madrassah was seen as an integral part of their development as Muslims,

several teachers expressed concern about the supplementary education both in terms of fatigue pupils suffered by attending school and then Madrassahs and the teaching and discipline within the Madrassah, which often contradicted the practices within schools” (p20).

Cherti and Bradley (2011) also pointed out that madrassahs did not always carry out CRB checks on the teachers. Upon the publication of their report, there was a discussion on the Islam Channel (5 December 2011)²⁴, hosted by the community activist, Salma Yaqoob. In her introduction, she stated that “teaching standards are not often of the best quality...and a teacher was recently imprisoned for 10 weeks for kicking and slapping boys...” (0.40 – 0.55 minutes). Later in the programme (13.30-13.45

²⁴ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tkfwi_2uaKE Downloaded 8.6.2016.

minutes) Yaqoob said: “I’ve witnessed this myself...in the mosques it was not unusual for sticks to be used, to hit the children.” Also present on the programme was Mogra²⁵ who runs a madrassah, in Leicester (Bawden, 2011) which may have the potential to be a model for the rest of the community. He explained that his madrassah had a zero tolerance of abuse of children. All of the teachers were CRB-checked and received training in child protection. Teachers were expected to model compassion. Children were said to enjoy attending the madrassah.

The madrassah system has come under criticism with reference to pedagogical problems. Rosowsky (2000) reminded us that in their school education when children read a text it is a given that they will understand its meaning; this is not so in the madrassah. There, the children are enabled to *read* but not necessarily *comprehend*. They learn to decode the text orally and recite the words. This different approach to reading was said to have “significant effects on reading behaviour in general and can, and does, affect reading in the second, or additional, language, which is, in this case, English” (p46). Elsewhere, Rosowsky (2001) pointed out that the reading behaviour learnt in the madrassah for the Pakistani children did overspill into their school education. Mogra (2007) confirmed that the quality of education provided in the madrassahs was significantly inferior to that of state-funded schools:

The premises and resources are often inadequate, the teachers often unqualified and the methods, which may include rote-learning and strict discipline, are often out of tune with contemporary western educational thinking and practice... There may be little place for discussion and intellectual understanding (p389).

²⁵ Mogra has been Assistant Secretary General of the one of the main Muslim representative organisations, Muslim Council of Britain.

In his research into the teaching of the Quran in Irish Muslim schools, Sai (2017) found that memorisation played a dominant role in the teaching where pupils were not exposed to understanding or explanation of what they recited or memorised. “Teacher and instruction-centred Qur'an education, with a mechanistic and ritualistic approach which aimed solely at memorisation, seemed to limit the potential of the pupils” (p8). For Sai, such an approach may encourage passivity; not ideal for young children who are likely to be accustomed to a more student-centred style in their normal schooling. He felt that professional development for Quran teachers on pedagogical practice ought to be a priority. In his view Quran teachers have the potential to have a very positive and influential role in the delivery of Islam to younger generations. Every effort should be made to realise the potential.

Sahin (2005) asserted that “Muslim educators must face the difficult question of *what it means to be Islamically educated* (original emphasis) in a multicultural society” (p167). He concluded that the traditional IRE “with its teacher-text centred approach and memorizing-based methods” (p179) did not help young Muslims to develop a mature Islamic subjectivity. He found the overwhelming emphasis in IRE was on outward teaching of Islam rather than creating a dialogue. “A case in point is the way in which young Muslims are introduced to the Quran. Despite the fact that many British young Muslims speak and think in English, there is not a well worked-out Quranic pedagogy in English” (p179). He identified the implications of this. “Thus, many of these young people are left ignorant of this fundamental source of Islam or at the mercy of radical transnational Islamic groups, which try to indoctrinate them into a rigid ahistorical understanding of Islam” (p179). Such ‘vulnerabilities’ can be a particular issue for young Muslims with low educational achievement (Iacopini et al., 2011). The House of

Commons (2012) also identified underdeveloped or confused religious understanding as a vulnerability to young people holding extremist views.

Sahin (2005) made a case for a different approach in Islamic education, pointing out that “according to the Quran, the educational process cannot be reduced to a mechanical process of training or indoctrinating, one-way transmission” (p180). He pointed out that the person-oriented developmental Quranic model of education, with its emphasis upon thinking, places the critical dialogic process at the very heart of Islamic educational self-understanding. Elsewhere, he (Sahin 2013) found the young Muslims “complained that the traditional Islamic education received at home and at the supplementary mosque schools was inadequate to help them respond Islamically to the rapid changes and challenges of secular multicultural polity” (p103). He stated that the young people “wanted to achieve a personal understanding and meaning in being a Muslim” (p103). In his view, this made it necessary to bring about a contemporary Islamic educational culture in order to facilitate a transformative process whereby young Muslims gain knowledge and understanding of Islam and develop an intelligent Muslim faith. Elsewhere (Sahin, 2016) he saw it as necessary to challenge indoctrinatory practices and provide young Muslims with Islamic literacy that integrated reflective thinking skills and intercultural understanding.

Coles (2008) offered a similar view, from his background as a “Muslim convert and a Senior Education Officer with a lifetime spent dealing with race, faith and cohesion issues” (p viii). Having worked as a Senior Education Adviser in Birmingham, he had a deep knowledge of the community being researched. He pointed out that the pedagogical style which young Muslims experienced in the madrassahs was very different from that which they encountered in the schools. He pointed out that many of

the madrassah teachers were not equipped to connect with the worlds of their students. Brohi (1979) stressed the importance of the development of critical thinking in Muslim children when it comes to learning about Islam. For Anderson et al. (2011): "No education could be successful and self-sustaining without encouraging critical thinking" (p21). They pointed out that the Muslim community had neglected this approach in favour of learning without understanding with its emphasis on *simply* transmitting rules and norms. For them, it was vital to use education to restore a sense of intellectual and political autonomy, enabling people the power to decide for themselves. They saw the objective for Islamic education to make Muslims autonomous human beings in their environment.

2.7.4 The opportunity cost of madrassah participation

While Pakistani youngsters are attending madrassah classes, could they be missing out on other activities? Strand (2007) spoke of the overall negative impact if religious activities competed with or reduced time that might otherwise be spent on curriculum related activities. "Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Indian pupils attending religious classes more than once a week report doing *less* (original italics) evenings homework than those who do not attend classes" (p79). Elsewhere, Strand (2008) has stated that attendance at religious classes has been found to be beneficial for students but only if it was about once a week; beyond this it came to have a negative impact. So, if Pakistani young people are spending their time at the madrassah, at the expense of doing their homework and participating in educationally useful activities, it is worth considering the implications of this.

2.7.5 Benefits of extra-curricular activities

Extra-curricular activities have been said to be beneficial (Feldman & Matjasko, 2005), especially for low SES students (Broh, 2002; Everson & Millsap, 2005). Hattie et al. (1997) pointed out that “physical activities can be used as an effective medium for participants to recognise and understand their own weaknesses, strengths, and resources and thus find the wherewithal to master the difficult and unfamiliar in other environments” (p45). They demonstrated that there were marked increases as a consequence of the adventure programs in the domains of social competence, interpersonal communication and educational achievement.

Hirsch (1987) outlined the importance of cultural literacy²⁶ in education, especially for disadvantaged children. Participation in extracurricular activities is said to be one source of such literacy. According to Lareau (2003), the extracurricular activities enabled children to gain more than the skills of playing cricket, violin etc. In the process, the children “learn to think for themselves as special and as entitled to receive certain kinds of services from adults. They also acquire a valuable set of white-collar work skills, including how to set priorities, manage an itinerary, shake hands with strangers, and work on a team (p39).

Marsh and Kleitman (2002) concluded that students who participated in extracurricular activities did better academically than their peers. They found that such activities had numerous academic outcomes, particularly for low SES students. For Massoni (2011) students learnt skills in “leadership, teamwork, organization, analytical thinking, problem

²⁶ “the network of information that all competent readers possess. It is the background information, stored in their minds, that enables them to take up a newspaper and read it with an adequate level of comprehension, getting the point, grasping the implications, relating what they read to the unstated context which alone gives meaning to what they read” (p2).

solving, time management, learning to juggle many tasks ... (p86). According to Wikeley et al. (2007) the activities enabled young people to develop self control and confidence and learn about learning. Collins et al. (2015) pointed out that by not getting involved in extra-curricular activities a student's perception of the school might be solely as a place of work, rather than one where a wider range of interests are pursued.

Within the Scottish education system, there was recognition for the role played by extra-curricular activities (Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2010). They were seen to enable “staff and students to see each other in a different light, building positive relationships and improving self-awareness and understanding of others (p7). The activities were seen to enable the students to contextualise their understanding within curriculum areas. In 2008, Education Scotland expanded the focus of its inspection process to include the learning available to young people outside schools. Could this be a model, for the inclusion of madrassah-learning, within the Ofsted framework?

The English government and its agencies have also recognised the important role played by extra-curricular activities in children's education. For Ofsted (2008), education outside the classroom leads to improved outcomes in achievement, motivation, personal development and behaviour. It also provides extra depth to pupils' learning and experience. In a White Paper (HMSO, 2005), it was seen as important

that children and young people have a rich and exciting range of opportunities and activities, beyond the school day, that will allow them to follow their interests, broaden their horizons, remove barriers to learning and motivate them to greater achievements (p58).

Elsewhere, the DCSF (2007a) pointed out that participation in extra-curricular activities can “help to improve attitudes to, and engagement with, school; build social and communication skills; help young people avoid taking risks such as experimenting with drugs or being involved in anti-social behaviour or crime; and improve their self-confidence and self-esteem (p6). Chowdry et al. (2009) pointed out that “young people who participate in positive activities at age 14 tend to have higher test scores” (p50). Recently (DfE, 2013) it was pointed out that such activities led to positive academic attitudes and better attendance. The, then, Secretary of State Michael Gove pointed out that most schools that excelled academically had a programme of extracurricular activities (DfE, 2014). He saw the purpose of such activities to help to build character and give children’s talents an opportunity to grow and to allow them to discover new talents they never knew they had.

Participation in extracurricular activities has implications for community cohesion as it is an opportunity for pupils to interact with those outside of their own ethnic group. Those who participate in them meet many new people, who they otherwise would not encounter (Massoni, 2011). This facilitates encounters between young people from different ethnic and faith groups and leads to better understanding, thereby building community cohesion (DCSF, 2007a). Elsewhere (CIC, 2007), it has been pointed out that such provision for young people was a critical starting point for tackling the tensions between different groups in the community. Here it is worth pointing out that Pakistanis have been identified as a segregated community (Burgess & Wilson 2004), making it even more important for their young people to have the chance to mix with others from outside their ethnic group.

Research by World Challenge (2015) showed that extra-curricular activities enabled young people to gain entry to university and lead successful lives in the workplace. They pointed out that whilst academic grades were the most important factor considered by university admissions teams,

evidence of extra-curricular activities remains an important part of the application process for 97% of respondents. Universities most value evidence of extra-curricular activities when deciding between applicants with similar grades and for courses that have an interview stage (p2).

58.5% of the universities indicated that it was important for students to demonstrate experience beyond academic achievements in their university applications and that 20-30% of a student's personal statement should be focused on extra-curricular experience. Sullivan (2001) linked the acquisition of cultural capital with educational attainment. This included familiarity with the dominant culture in society and ability to understand and use educated language. Cultural activities were seen to enable pupils to succeed at school. "Possession of cultural capital does have a significant effect on GCSE attainment" (p911). Zimdars et al. (2009) pointed out that for students who apply to Oxford, cultural knowledge played a significant role, alongside academic attainment, "perhaps because it allows the applicant to persuade the admissions tutors that they have the right sort of intellectual breadth and potential, which may not be adequately assessed by examination results" (p660). They concluded that in such a situation students from lower SES and South Asians scored significantly lower than their White higher SES peers. In their report for the DfE, Thornton et al. (2014) recommended to state schools, serving disadvantaged communities, to provide extra-curricular activities so the pupils could draw on them in an interview and compete with their more advantaged peers from the independent schools.

2.8 Homework and study support

Homework has been reported as being beneficial (Strand, 2008), in enabling students to become self-reliant, develop initiative and accustom them to the idea of working profitably out of school. It can reinforce and extend the school curriculum, develop skills of independent learning or help to link up home and school. Based on the conclusions of the EPPSE project²⁷, (Sammons et al., 2011; Sylva et al. 2011) it has been pointed out that spending two or more hours daily on homework was a strong predictor of better attainment as well as better social-behavioural outcomes. For Holmes and Croll (1989) there was a strong association between homework and performance in examinations. Cooper et al. (2006) concluded that positive effects of homework included immediate achievement and long-term academic and non-academic benefits. It increased the time students spent on academic tasks and made a positive impact to their achievement. For Sharp (2002), time spent on homework had a positive effect on the achievement of pupils, especially for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.

For the DfEE (1998), learning at home is an essential part of good education to which children are entitled. They saw homework played an important role in helping pupils to acquire skills and confidence and in raising their standards of achievement. It also encouraged them to engage in lifelong learning. The Teachers' Standards (DfE 2011) asked teachers to set homework and plan other out-of-class activities in order "to consolidate and extend the knowledge and understanding pupils have acquired" (Part one, 4).

²⁷ Since its beginning in 1997 the project has investigated the attainment and development of approximately 3,000 children from pre-school to the end of Key Stage 3. Models were developed to test which factors predicted students' outcomes in different domains – academic, social-behavioural and socio-emotional.

Ethnic minority parents have been found to be supportive of homework (Hughes & Greenhough, 2002; Hughes, 2005). However, it has been acknowledged that children from deprived backgrounds may find it harder than their peers to complete their homework which may compound the gap between the more and the less advantaged (DCSF, 2009a). Lack of appropriate space in which to do homework, lack of resources, not being able to turn to someone when needing help were some of the problems faced by children from disadvantaged families. Sallee and Rigier (2008) speak of the 'weighted scales' of homework, when contrasting the situation of the differing SES students. Some go home to well-educated parents and well-resourced environments while others may have family responsibilities, parents who are not able to help with homework due to a range of factors and few educational resources in their homes. They signal how this can further disadvantage some students while helping others do even better. "To not take these differences into account when assigning homework is to contribute to the widening of the gap teachers are committed to closing" (p49). MacBeth et al. (2001) pointed out that the more formal education the parents themselves had the longer their children spent on homework. Basit (1995) pointed out the inability of her Pakistani parents to help their daughters with academic matters such as homework and subject option choices.

In the US, teachers in the KIP (Knowledge Is Power) schools (Lack, 2009), recognising that their disadvantaged parents were unable to help their children with homework, gave the children their mobile phones so they could call them at night for homework help (Tough, 2006). The Education Select Committee spoke of poorer children not having space to complete their homework (TSO, 2014):

...the evidence shows us that it is much harder for those youngsters we are talking about to do their homework...in a room where nobody was eating, watching television or doing anything except their homework...

One possible response to this situation, for the Select Committee, was to provide time for these children at the end of the school day so they could complete their homework. Earlier, the DFEE (1998) had pointed to the possibilities of offering homework opportunities "at places other than home. These may include opportunities at school, for example during lunch time or before or after school, as well as opportunities away from school premises, at libraries or community centres" (para 35). As a response, study support was recognised as an alternative to traditional way of doing homework and was adopted as a policy initiative by the New Labour²⁸ Government (Elliott et al. 2004; DFES 2006a). It was recognised that such provision can be particularly beneficial in raising the achievement of underachieving students. MacBeth et al. (2001) pointed out that study support was particularly beneficial for minority ethnic students and its impact on their attainment was over twice the size of that on the White students. *Playing for Success* was one example of study support provision, made available, through the Football Association, at a number of football clubs. The provision was managed by experienced teachers who used the medium and environment of sport to support work in literacy, numeracy and ICT. The initiative was found to have wide ranging benefits (Sharp et al., 2003. Train and Elkin (2000) also pointed to the effective role of public libraries in delivering homework clubs.

In the current research I intend to explore the situation of Pakistani boys in relation to homework. Do they, for example, have the space and the resources necessary to

²⁸ New Labour was in power 1997-2010.

complete their homework and are they able to turn to someone in the family if they need help in completion of the work set?

2.9 School factors

There are a number of school-based factors which research suggests impact on the achievement of Pakistani pupils. These include teacher-pupil relationships, the make-up of the teaching workforce and understanding by teachers of the pupils' background.

Good teaching and good teachers are said to be fundamental to unlocking the potential of children and to the delivery of high standards. This raises the question as to what such a 'good teacher' is in the context of the education of Pakistanis. For the Asian children in Bhatti's ethnographic study (1999), the qualities of such a teacher included both their ability to teach and their attitudes towards them as pupils. The teacher would be able to control the class, engage all the children in the learning and have a sense of humour. Teachers who were racist, sexist or sarcastic were not seen as good teachers. Also good teachers were those who were approachable and with whom children were able to talk about 'normal things'. "A good teacher was someone who went out of their way to help those children who were having problems" (p181). Such teachers were seen, by the Asian children, as an antidote to any negative encounters they had had with White students.

2.9.1 Teacher-pupil relationships

The school is a relational environment, given the amount of time young people and teachers spend with each other. Teachers' capacity to imbue productive values about school work, motivate students to engage in the learning, to listen to, respect and to understand their students; all of these rely on the effectiveness of teacher-student relationships (Murray-Harvey, 2010). In relation to minority and disadvantaged young

people, Alexander and Entwistle (1987) pointed out that teachers who had a sense of commitment to them and had high expectations of them were more successful in working with them. They pointed out that good teaching was not simply a matter of using time wisely or delivering the right lesson plan; it involved teachers having the right relationships with the children. According to Pigott and Cowen (2000), positive teacher-pupil relationships support a pupil's feeling of security in the school setting and help to facilitate academic achievement. Additionally, when teachers have a close relationship with their pupils, they report having communication that is more open with those children. In turn, children who have greater open communication with the teachers feel more comfortable asking clarifying questions and volunteering to participate in classroom activities. This view was held by Birch and Ladd (1997) too; they pointed out that children were better able to utilise as a source of support the teachers with whom they had close relationships. Furthermore, such children also saw the school as a supportive environment. O'Connor and McCartney (2007) reported significant associations between quality of teacher-child relationships and achievement. Children "with higher quality relationships participate more and are more engaged in the classroom than those with lower quality relationships" (p345).

The right teacher-student relationships are said to help establish an environment that leads to improved pupil learning outcomes (Haertel et al. 1981; Leadbeater, 2008; OECD, 2011); effective teaching (Delpit, 1995); greater enjoyment (Gorard & See, 2011); success in teaching interactions and increased student achievement (Warikoo, 2004) and social/emotional competence (Murray-Harvey, 2010). Chowdry et al. (2009), in a report commissioned by the DCSF, pointed out that "good teacher-pupil relations at age 14 are positively associated with progress between Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4, and are consistently negatively associated with engagement in a range of risky

behaviours (including truancy) at ages 14 and 16” (p49). Callanan et al. (2009) identified a number of ‘within the school system’ causes of disengagement and underachievement, one of which was relationship with teachers. “Young people particularly valued teachers that they felt talked to them with respect, listened to their views, showed an active interest in their attainment and treated them more like an adult.”“Where there was a strong positive relationship with a teacher, young people would describe working harder and attending those lessons more regularly” (p33). In Pomeroy’s (1999) research in a secondary school context, the ability of the teachers to establish positive relationships was seen as very important for the students and a consistently described feature of their experience of school. They equated this with being a good teacher.

Here, it is worth pointing out, while teachers are most likely to make connections with and hence successfully teach children who share their background such as ethnicity, many a good teacher, without necessarily coming from the same ethnic background as their students, can find points of connection with them (Warikoo, 2004).

2.9.2 Teacher understanding of pupil background

Central to the teacher-pupil relationships is the understanding teachers have of their pupils and the world they inhabit. Before I began my current study, I encountered a newsletter from an education consultancy (Antidote, 2010), which spoke of Muslim students complaining that teachers did not know them as individuals.

The students reported that they were not spoken to by name. They weren’t recognised by staff outside classrooms in the corridors and canteen. They found that staff mixed up their names and regularly exchanged the names of girls that were friends and tended to be found together or, worse in their opinion, addressed them as ‘Hey you!’

The students wanted staff to invest more time in getting to know them as people, their likes, dislikes, tastes and opinions. Kohli and Solorzano (2012) pointed out that it is important for teachers to know their pupils' names as this is a central part of children's identity and often carry cultural and family significance. For them it is also important that teachers learn to pronounce the children's names properly, especially in relation to minority children who are often subjected to their names being mispronounced by their teachers. Sue et al. (2007) defined such mispronunciations as an example of racial microaggression and explained that these "are brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioural or environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional that communicate hostile, derogatory or negative racial slights and insults towards people of color" (p271). Such experiences are also said to be what has been described as 'everyday racism' (Essed, 1990). Having lived in England as a minority and with a name which was often 'different' my own experience can support this argument as can the experience of many other minority background people I know. For Pomeroy (1999), central to being a good teacher was understanding one's pupils: knowing their name, their hobbies and interests, what is going on in their lives, and, perhaps, knowledge of the pupils' culture and religion, their linguistic experiences and abilities and their general cultural context.

Swann (1985) considered it important for teachers to have "respect for and understanding of the cultural heritage which belongs to the children growing up in our society [and] sensitivity to the diversity of cultural background in today's school population (p560). With particular reference to Muslim children, the importance of teachers understanding the pupils' religious and cultural identities has been stressed (DCSF, 2008). This is placed within the wider frame of "the rich Islamic heritage and culture" (p15). However, it has been advised not to take a simplistic and 'essentialist' (Baumann, 1995; Harris & Sim, 2002) view. Elsewhere, schools have been advised to

respect local people, their culture and values (DCSF, 2009) by teachers getting to know the local community and becoming involved in its activities. To be effective and successful in doing so, “staff need to: understand the nature of the locality the children live in; empathise with the local community and its values; and be aware of the barriers to achievement but not to allow these to lower expectations” (p28). However, Bloom (2011) has spoken of teachers having ‘tabloid’ understanding of Islam’. This was a reference to Revell’s research (2011) who had found that Islam was misrepresented in education and that teachers’ understanding of it was largely formed by the media. It would be necessary to research the extent to which teachers in Birmingham schools understand the backgrounds of their Pakistani pupils.

Robertson (2006) pointed out the importance for teachers to have an understanding of their pupils’ background and on-going cultural lives. This was based on her in-depth study of five Pahari-speaking Pakistani-Kashmiri children in both mainstream school and madrassah classes. For Murrell (2000), appropriately trained teachers who are able to show cultural sensitivity to their pupils are able to produce strong achievement results from their minority students. Elsewhere, it has been pointed out that teachers cannot teach children well if they lack an understanding of their students’ cultures and lives, and if they lack meaningful relationships with their families (Warren, 2005).

2.9.3 Role of teacher training

During the New Labour Government, equality and diversity training was recognised as being important for teachers and those entering the profession; to enable them to think about and reassess their assumptions about, and understand the points of similarity they might share with, students from diverse backgrounds (Warikoo, 2004). The TTA (2000) saw it as the responsibility of teachers to prepare all pupils for a life in a culturally diverse society. In order to help ITT providers to train new teachers accordingly, they

provided guidance and resources. Providers were asked to make sure that trainees were equipped with “the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to raise the attainment of minority ethnic pupils and improve the quality of their education” (p9). This was reiterated through the professional teacher standards (ITTA, 2003) where it was made clear that teachers have “high expectations of all pupils; respect their social, cultural, linguistic, religious and ethnic backgrounds; and are committed to raising their educational achievement” (S1.1, p7).

A number of researchers have pointed out that equality and diversity training had been de-prioritised and education policy had moved away from a focus on ‘particular’ needs and circumstances of minority children.. Klein (2007) reported that the majority of newly qualified teachers had not been prepared to teach in culturally diverse schools. “Most training institutions deal with equality in a day, or just one session, or not at all.” (p119). She was of the view that the body of knowledge created in the wake of government reports (Swann Report, 1985; Eggleston Report, 1986) had disappeared from the late 1980s onwards. Meer and Modood (2007) also pointed out that diversity was something that had been covered during the 1980s but then had gone off the agenda. According to Gillborn (1997), there was a “largely deracialised discourse such that a concern with ethnic inequalities of achievement and opportunity has been effectively removed from the policy agenda” (p345). Crozier (1999) pointed out that ITT and related educational discourses had become ‘deracialised’. (p80), leading to teachers becoming technicians or applied scientists. This raised implications for CPD (continuing professional development) on diversity (Blair, 2002). According to Walker et al. (2005), ethnic minority students considered it important for the schools to have staff whom they felt understood their cultural background as well as diverse staff who could be their role models. “They argued that the ethnicity profile of the staff was a

visible and genuine indication of the school's commitment to equality issues" (p32).

They listed examples of effective practice, which called on schools to respect and be inclusive of all cultures and "institute strategies that are consistent with the cultural characteristics of the students" (p7). The headteachers in the schools studied demanded that teachers "demonstrate a willingness to understand the cultures and background realities of their students and school community" (p11), in order "to view the school and broader society through the eyes of their students and the communities the staff served" (p13). The schools' CPD programme was focused on knowing the community, in terms of its language background, SES context and culture. Their research was conducted in five schools, across England, including Birmingham, which had 'substantial number' of students from minority ethnic backgrounds.

In 2004, a TTA-commissioned review identified strategies which could be used by teacher trainees and newly qualified teachers to raise the attainment of pupils from culturally diverse backgrounds (Parker-Jenkins et al., 2004). This recommended that the:

government should ensure that all providers actively enskill future teachers for the challenges presented by working with pupils from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and that this should be a substantial core and not a separate additional, one-off module....and that teachers need to be encouraged to engage with issues of racism (p47)

In response, the commitment on diversity was reiterated in the revised QTS standards (TDA, 2007). These spoke of the importance of responding to learners' diverse needs and overcoming potential barriers to learning. It was seen as incumbent on ITT to enable trainees to take practical account of diversity and promote equality and inclusion

in their teaching, including in the choice of resources. Teachers were asked to “understand children’s religious and cultural influences” (C18); “promote equality in their teaching” (C19); “make links between in-school learning and learning in out-of-school contexts” (C37) and to “have extensive knowledge of equality” (E6).

However, the gaps in diversity preparation of trainee teachers remained. Hick et al. (2011) reported that, in response to the question: ‘How good was your training in preparing you to teach learners from minority ethnic backgrounds?’, 43% of primary and 44% of secondary NQTs answered ‘good or very good’. Since then, the situation is likely to have worsened as a result of deracialisation in ITT. The revised Teachers’ Standards (DfE, 2011), omitted, deliberately, issues such as equality, diversity and inclusion from teacher training discourse. Teacher training had become focussed on classroom competencies (Lander (2013) and teachers were treated as ‘technicians or applied scientists’ (Crozier, 1999). Consequently, trainee teachers were unsure and lacking in confidence about how to talk about equality and diversity issues in their work or to understand how to tackle the inequalities that schools as public institutions may perpetuate. They thus relied on their ‘ethnocentric everyday world’ (Troyna, 1994). A similar problem was reported by Hick et al. (2011), that race equality was addressed in a minimalist way on ITT courses and that many teacher education courses generally devoted only a single session to race equality issues. This left teachers uncomfortable when engaging with issues related to racial differences and racism. They were reported, by their pupils, to have an under-appreciation of the impact of everyday racism. Hick et al. (2011) pointed out that short, one-off lectures were not viewed by most interviewees as an effective way to engage students on topics like race equality and racism.

ITT providers were found by Lander (2013) to “labour to include the subject of ‘race’ and ethnicity within the teacher education curriculum” (p2). Anecdotal evidence has confirmed that diversity has more or less disappeared from ITT programmes. One ITT provider has communicated to me that their students currently have one two-hour session on race, ethnicity and gender. “That session is under threat because of other ‘priorities’ on ITT and the movement within teacher training away from universities into schools (Race²⁹ 2015, email). The TTA (2000) had recognised that, like others, trainee teachers “may hold mistaken or stereotypical perceptions of groups from particular social, religious or cultural backgrounds” (p59). It was possible that this was now the case. With little or no coverage of equality and diversity on ITT courses, it was not surprising to read that teachers had tabloid knowledge of Islam (Bloom, 2011). This meant that there was now a greater need for schools to provide such training, including to newly qualified teachers, as a part of their CPD programmes.

Gay and Howard (2000) set out the agenda for ITT. With an increasing racial, cultural and linguistic gap between teachers (predominantly White) and students (increasingly diverse), they made the case that all trainee and practising teachers need to develop multicultural knowledge and pedagogical skills. They stated that such education should be mandatory and thorough. “No students should graduate from any teacher education program and be certified or hired to teach without being thoroughly trained in multicultural education” (p7). Furthermore, they made a case for ITT courses to require, of trainees, a certain pre-entry multicultural knowledge and competence. This would then give them appropriate foundations to build on the relevant pedagogical knowledge. Although this case was made sixteen years ago, as an idea, it may still be relevant to the current situation in ITT.

²⁹ Senior Lecturer in Education. I had met him at an education conferences. So I emailed him to seek his views on this matter.

2.9.4 Funds of knowledge

Moll et al. (1992) defined ‘funds of knowledge’ as historically accumulated and culturally developed within communities; the knowledge of which can enable teachers to connect with their pupils as whole beings and at a deeper level. Otherwise, the teacher-pupil relationship is likely to be ‘thin’ and ‘single stranded’ where the teacher only knows the pupil from his performance within the rather limited classroom context, not necessarily what pupils may bring to the school from their wider lives. The teachers are, therefore, unable to build on what the minority children already know. They also spoke of the dynamic nature of the cultural context of the students and their families; to become aware of them is never a one-off exercise but requires on-going learning by teachers. They suggested that teachers should go into the community, gain a deep understanding of its context and then draw out relevant learning which can be linked to the formal curriculum of the school. Teachers can then help to bridge the students' lives inside of school with the world they experience outside. This was similar to what Walker et al. (2005) had reported. The headteachers they studied recognised that their schools could not be successful if they operated in a vacuum and, therefore, stressed the importance of understanding and connecting with the broader community. They saw it essential for teachers to have a presence in the wider community as a way of helping their students to achieve. They worked hard to understand their students' beliefs and value structures and to appreciate reality through their eyes. Headteachers constantly reiterated to staff the need to locate their leadership and work within the unique context of their school.

Lee (2001) used the concept ‘cultural modeling, which is based on the idea that students bring to school a rich array of knowledge from their wider cultural lives which offers a fertile bridge for scaffolding school-based learning. For such work to succeed it was

seen as necessary for there to be trusted relationships between the school and its wider community.

According to the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)³⁰, students do not enter school as empty vessels to be filled with knowledge. Rather, they bring with them rich and varied language and cultural experiences which need to be recognised and valued. In their view teachers and teacher educators should actively acknowledge, celebrate, and incorporate the funds of knowledge as pedagogical strategies that are culturally and linguistically responsive. For the NCTE, teachers need spaces to learn about the communities in which they will teach and opportunities to explore and experience the contexts in which students live and form their cultural identities. For the DFES (2004b), schools have much to gain from the experiences and understandings of pupils, their families and communities; drawing on their funds of knowledge would enrich a school in a range of valuable ways.

There have been a number of projects which have used the 'funds of knowledge' approach in the education of minority children, which may provide models of practice. Conteh (2012) reported teachers' efforts to understand the pupils' wider lives by visiting the children's homes and madrassahs. This enabled them to take account of the 'context' in their teaching (Noordhoff & Kleinfeld, 1993). The Home-School Knowledge Exchange (HSKE) was an action-research programme in which parents, teachers and children exchanged knowledge between home and school (Hughes & Pollard, 2006). Andrews and Yee (2006) provided two case studies from the HSKE project, involving Muslim children's lives and learning out of school and then consider

³⁰ <http://www.ncte.org/cee/positions/diverselearnersince>

the implications for educational practice of drawing on these kinds of funds of knowledge.

Thomson and Hall (2008) examined instances of children's 'funds of knowledge' 'leaking' into English classrooms but whose learning potential was not fully utilised by the teachers. Marshall and Toohey (2010), in their focus on Punjabi Sikh children in a Canadian context, draw attention to 'funds of knowledge' which challenged school notions of secularity, gender, equity and cultural authenticity. For them such knowledge had the potential for becoming a resource for children, teachers and the wider community. It is likely that some of the Pakistani Muslim funds of knowledge would similarly differ with school perspectives.

Shalabi and Taylor (2011) pointed out that the most fundamental funds of knowledge in Muslim households are the Islamic culture and contributions of cultural institutions such as mosques. For them, students' academic performance is enhanced when they receive teaching that utilises aspects of their home culture, pointing out that the role of parents, as representatives and reinforcing agents of funds of knowledge, was the most significant factor in shaping minority students' identities and social experiences.

2.10 Representative diversity

It is suggested that a workforce that is representative of the people it serves is more likely to help ensure that the interests of all groups are considered in the decision-making and the policy making process becomes more inclusive. This is based on the theory of 'representative bureaucracy' (Bradbury & Kellough, 2011). They pointed out that the beneficiaries benefit from the discretionary efforts of bureaucrats and explained

that such efforts are a function, in part, of the attitudes, values and beliefs that result from the bureaucrats' social background.

It has been argued that representative bureaucracies are beneficial to ethnic minorities (Eckhard, 2014), racial minorities (Selden 1997; Sowa & Selden, 2003) and in educational contexts (Pitts 2005). Based on Spivak's work (1988), there is also the question of whether the minority people (such as Pakistanis) have a right to be represented as teachers and decision makers.

2.10.1 The key role of minority teachers

Within the field of education, researchers and policymakers have accepted that the workforce should be diverse and should reflect the ethnic diversity of society. Minority teachers are said to provide role models (Quiocho & Rios, 2000), act as cultural brokers (Irvine, 1989), cultural experts (Ross, 2001; Basit & Santoro, 2012). For Howard (2010), minority teachers fulfilled the role of advocate for minority students. They are able to act as a 'bridge' between, and 'translators' of, minority and dominant cultures (Irvine (1989), a function which had been identified by Abbas (2004). In his Birmingham-based research he had found working class Asian parents particularly in favour of having Asian teachers.

Minority teachers are said to have the potential to bridge the ever-widening divide between minority pupils and their mainly white teachers (Magaldi et al. 2016). They can, if given the space and opportunity, bring a more authentic perspective based on their own lived experience and firsthand knowledge. Through their counterstorying they can interrupt majoritarian narratives, "defined as a mindset of positions, perceived wisdoms, and shared cultural understandings brought to the discussion of race" (Fránquiz et al. 2011, p282). While such narratives position the norms of the White majority as standard

and shape the school curriculum they are said to be inaccurate constructions of the knowledge and lived experiences of minority children, families, and communities. "We contend that if teachers are not given opportunities to deconstruct majoritarian tales in educational practice, then racist norms will continue to define how teachers view themselves, schooling, families, and students" (p282).

Kohli and Pizarro (2016) pointed out that minority teachers are likely to have a heightened awareness of educational injustice and racism while Ross (2001) pointed out that they are better at challenging racism; given they might have been its victim, they are more likely to understand some of its subtleties. He and Howard (2010) have supported the concept of 'inclusive diversity', where it is not so much important for, say, Pakistani students to be taught *directly* by Pakistani or Muslim teachers but more an indirect benefit; by having them on the staff, to see them around the school and have occasional contact with them. Teachers are said to do much more than teach content; they also personify content (Howard, 2010). They provide a model of what it is like to be an educated person; something for the young people to aspire to:

If we want students to believe that they themselves might one day be ... mentors, guides and educated people, then we need them to see diverse examples of such people, including at least one who looks like they, the students, look (Kennedy, 1991, p660).

Stewart et al. (1989) also supported the 'role model' argument. "Black teachers can have a special impact on Black students simply by being in the classroom. A Black teacher serves as a role model for Black students, thereby exposing Black students to other Black individuals who have been successful" (p143). For Steele and Aronson (1995), the presence of same-race teachers may reduce "stereotype threats" and boost minority students' confidence, esteem, and enthusiasm. Such a threat is said to occur when a

student perceives that s/he could be viewed through the lens of a negative stereotype and lowers academic engagement and performance as a result.

Roch and Pitts (2012) pointed out that where schools' workforce was representative of their communities there was a positive influence on minority students' performance.

Eckhard (2014) pointed out that where there is a bureaucratic *drift* i.e. there is a lack of bureaucratic representation, policies are not effective. The problem here can be even more profound where the majority-background bureaucrats are prejudiced against minorities. Arshad et al. (2004) reported that minority students appreciated having teachers from their own ethnic group, expecting them to better understand the students and assist them to feel more comfortable. Warikoo (2004) pointed to there being a better connection between teachers and pupils from the same ethnic background arising out of their common cultural background and the teachers' heightened understanding of the students' family and cultural context as well as parental interactions with the school.

The attainment level of minority students is said to be helped by the presence of teachers from their own background (Weiher, 2000). Egalite et al. (2015) asserted that an absence of teachers from their own ethnic group can lead to a lack of shared values, dispositions, and symbols which might undermine classroom learning and teacher-student interactions. They also supported the idea of ethnic minority teachers serving as role models and being uniquely positioned to act as advocates and cultural translators for ethnic minority students. They concluded that same-race teachers made a particular difference for their students' attainment. Their findings confirmed Dee's (2005) research who had found that same-race teachers made a difference to students' attainment. He spoke of 'passive' teacher effects which were triggered by a teacher's identity, not by explicit teacher behaviours.

Basit and Santoro (2012) also supported the employment of minority teachers in schools serving multi-cultural populations. They found these teachers fulfilled important roles related to the heritage of the minority ethnic students. Many of them were appointed because of their ethnicity and knowledge about languages and their potential to develop sound home–school relationships. The teachers found that their particular expertise was often drawn upon by their colleagues who lacked the necessary cultural understanding. The minority teachers were able to foster home–school relationships for minority parents who otherwise had little contact with their children's schools. The researchers concluded that minority ethnic teachers had significant contributions to make to the schooling of minority ethnic students because of their knowledge about their students' cultural practices, religions and home lives.

The likelihood of discontinuity between minority children and their schools is lessened where the school employs teachers from minority background (Klopfenstein, 2005).

These teachers are more able to provide the ‘cultural congruence’ for the students and match their home and school environments. For Howard (2010), minority teachers helped minority students to adjust to the lack of synchrony between home and school culture and made “connections between their own backgrounds and school systems, which are commonly founded on the values and norms of the dominant culture” (p4).

For Delpit (1995) the argument was not so much that teachers *must* be of the students’ ethnic group but that efforts should be made for the teaching workforce to be diverse.

Carrington (2002) had described this as an inclusive form of representation: “for teachers who share the ethnic and cultural backgrounds of our increasingly diverse student bodies may serve, along with parents and other community members, to provide insights that might otherwise remain hidden” (p181).

A word of caution needs to be stated here, so to not present minority teachers as the perfect solution. They may have the potential to make a certain specialist contribution but their limitations need to be acknowledged, one of which refers to the concept 'internalised racism' (Padilla, 2001). This is where minorities adopt majority White perspectives and come to accept their own communities as inferior. For Speight (2007), such a process "refers to the acceptance, by marginalized racial populations, of the negative societal beliefs and stereotypes about themselves" (p129). Having lived in the UK since childhood, I have some understanding and experience of internalised racism. Kohli (2014) has suggested that there should be opportunities, through ITT and CPD, for minority teachers to unpack their internalised racism.

Local teachers can also play an important role in schools. Most schools have a small number of such teachers and support staff who are from the local community. Even if they no longer live there, they will have been raised there and will maintain contact with friends, former neighbours, and relatives in the area. They may have a unique understanding of the school's cultural and social context and may be able to act as a bridge between the school and its wider community. Such staff usually share common ethnic, religious and cultural identities which provide a foundation on which school-community partnerships can be constructed (Reed, 2009). Reed also spoke of "commuter teachers", who only come into the neighbourhood to work and as soon as they finish, they get into their cars and leave the area. They maybe at the school for many years but may never go outside its gate. They, therefore, maybe unlikely to understand what it is like to live in the locality, let alone understand the community's resources. Local teachers may be better equipped for the task of delivering, what Flynn et al. (2009) defined as 'place-based' education. For them, "using the place as content is

a viable means for increasing student achievement, increasing community involvement...” (p137).

2.10.2 Government support for diversity in the teaching workforce

For many years the idea of a diverse teaching profession had government support. Swann Report (1985) had argued that ethnic minority teachers would be a source of cultural expertise within schools, who would help to challenge racism and contribute towards meeting the particular needs of ethnic minority pupils; acting as role models for them. Furthermore, presence of minority staff would provide reassurance for ethnic minority parents that their needs would be understood and would help to counter “the inherent incongruity of all White teaching staffs, often living well away from the catchment areas of their schools” (p604). Therefore, Swann recommended that “far more consideration should be given, in making appointments, to the extent to which a particular ethnic, cultural, linguistic or religious background is an *additional and desirable* feature for a job in *any* (my emphasis) school - whether multi-racial or 'all-White' (p605). In recognising that much of a teacher’s influence on the pupils was indirect i.e. who they are rather than just what they do, Swann argued that “an education which seeks to prepare all pupils for life in a pluralist society can surely best be provided by a teaching force which is itself pluralist in character”(p605).

Blair and Bourne (2000) supported the need for a diverse teaching workforce. Schools in their research reported that ethnic minority teachers would help to “affirm a positive sense of identity among ethnic minority children”, would enable schools to better understand the issues faced by minority group children, be “a positive influence on their colleagues and the culture of the school”, be “able to communicate with minority children in their first language” and better “able to encourage and motivate them” (p162).

The DES (2003) stated that the “school workforce should reflect the diversity of the school population” (p19). Cline et al. (2002) found that teachers as well as children and parents had argued that there would be many advantages to their school if it had teachers from a wider range of cultural backgrounds on the staff. Later, the government (HMSO, 2005) commitment was broadened to include Black and minority ethnic school leaders in order for the workforce to be “more reflective of the pupils in our classrooms” (p86). DFES (2005b) asked that workforce diversity should be taken into account in teacher recruitment strategies and DCSF (2008a) stated that “parents’ confidence in services is higher in services where the composition of the workforce reflects that of the local community” (p41). They pointed out “that we want to facilitate diversity wherever we can, and to have a teaching population that is representative of the pupil population” (p41). The DCSF (2009d) has also encouraged schools to recruit from their local communities, and, in particular, their ex-pupils.

2.10.3 National steps towards diversity in teaching

Table 8 National proportions of the Pakistani and White teachers and pupil population

Ethnicity	School workforce (%)	School workforce (No)	Pupils (%)	Pupils (No)
White	93.3	836,070	78.0	5,195,778
Pakistani	0.8	7,192	3.8	253,127

In order to achieve diversity within the teaching workforce, a number of measures have been employed at the national level, including setting of recruitment targets, targeted advertising, mentoring schemes, taster courses and training bursaries (Carrington, 2002).

In 1997, Estelle Morris, the then Junior Minister for Education launched a campaign to attract more ethnic minority teachers. She said it was "absolutely right that ethnic-minority children should be taught by teachers from their own communities, but she added that *all children* (my emphasis) would benefit from a diverse teaching force" (Ghouri, 1997). The WRECC report (1999), cited below, had also made the point that it was "essential for White pupils and their parents to interact with Black professionals if we are to overcome racism" (p4) Soon after, (DFES, 2001), it was reported that the TTA had "set targets to increase the proportion of entrants to training from ethnic minority groups to 9% by 2005/06" (p24). Later (HM Government, 2005) efforts were made to build on the above target "to ensure we have a workforce including headteachers and school leaders which is more reflective of the pupils in our classrooms" (para 8.14). They also committed to providing support to ensure that all teachers had the skills and confidence to teach in diverse classrooms.

TTA enlisted the support of community organisations in order to achieve a diverse teaching workforce. Wolverhampton Race Equality Council Consortium (WRECC, 1999) was commissioned to undertake an action research project on recruitment and retention of ethnic minority teachers. The Consortium included Bilston Community College, the institution where I was the Deputy Director: Equal Rights and Opportunities Management Unit. One of the ways I directly contributed to this work was by setting up the Black Access into Teaching Advisory Group. The final report of the project stated that, in order to achieve a diverse teaching workforce, it needed statutory authorities, educational institutions and communities working in equal partnership.

The headteachers in the research by Walker et al. (2005) were of the view that it was important that the staff profile should parallel the ethnic profile of the pupils. They

placed a high priority on both the recruitment and development of suitable staff, with the idea that they would provide positive role models for the students and bring cultural knowledge that comes only from living within a culture. They recruited ethnic minorities into non-teaching roles and then nurtured them towards qualified teacher status. They took Positive Action, within the equality legislation, in order to develop the careers of their minority staff. Achieving a balanced staff profile was also seen as a means of openly expressing the school's dedication to its students and community.

Recently, the government has supported diversity initiatives within school leadership through the Leadership Equality and Diversity Fund (NCTL, 2015). The purpose of the fund was to help address under-representation of particular groups in school leadership positions “in particular there are significant leadership gaps for Black and Minority Ethnic and female leaders” (p4).

According to the available data for the teaching workforce, there continues to be an underrepresentation of ethnic minorities, especially of Pakistanis, when the percentage of teachers is compared with that of the Pakistani pupils. According to the DfE (2013, Table 8), in November 2012 there were 93.3 per cent White and 0.8 per cent Pakistani teachers. At the same time 78 per cent of the pupils were White and 3.8 per cent of Pakistani heritage.

2.10.4 Birmingham efforts to improve teacher diversity

Historically, Birmingham Council had taken steps to make sure that its workforce reflected the local population (CRE, 1987; Solomos & Back, 1995). It had set a 20% target for the recruitment of ethnic minority employees and put in place a Positive Action programme. It was accepted that the proportion of teachers from Black and minority ethnic groups “still falls far short of the proportion of Black and minority

ethnic adults in the City's population (20%) and Black and minority ethnic children in the Committee's schools (38%)” (BCC, 1994, p26). In a communication to headteachers, it was stated “...the percentage of Black and minority ethnic children within our schools needs to be reflected in the ethnic composition of staff in school and Education Department as a whole” (BCC, 1997a, p4). On another occasion, it was acknowledged that there was “a huge mismatch between pupils and teachers, in that the pupil population is made up of 39% Black and minority ethnic pupils. Conversely the number of Black teachers stands at *only* (original emphasis) 6.7%" (BCC, 1998, section 4).

There are two examples of local effort, in Birmingham, directed at achieving greater diversity in the teaching workforce. The MERITT scheme ran for many years, during which time it helped to train 150 teachers from Pakistani and other minority ethnic groups, including some who had progressed to leadership level (BCC, 2004c; 2008a). The other example involves a specially designed ITT course (Campbell & Felderhof, 2007). This had been designed by Westhill College, a local ITT provider. The outcome was the successful launch of a concurrent B.Ed. degree in which the main subject element was Islamic Studies. Structurally, it reflected the Religious and Theological Studies course largely rooted in the Christian tradition. On completion, the students qualified for the award of the Muslim Teacher's Certificate which the Birmingham Muslim Coordinating Committee had agreed should be awarded, on the model of the Catholic Teacher's Certificate. Campbell and Felderhof explained that Westhill had established the training course as a part of its Christian duty to support the Muslim community and recognise the integrity of its faith. It was also seen as important for the Muslim community to speak for itself and be given space in the world of Higher

Education on terms negotiated with the Muslim community. The course was terminated when the college was taken over by Birmingham University, in 2001.

The problem of ethnic minority under-representation in the school workforce persisted, especially with reference to Pakistanis. In 2009, Birmingham employed 3.8% Pakistani teachers, compared to a Pakistani pupil population of 24.5%. The LA recognised the importance of ethnic makeup of teachers to be similar to that of the pupils. They produced a strategy whose purpose was to address the imbalance between the demographics in the teaching workforce and pupil population (BCC 2006).

The above data provide a backdrop for exploring teacher diversity within my research. It will be necessary to seek the views of the Pakistani pupils and their parents on this matter. Do they, for example, see it as important to have teachers from their own ethnic and religious background?

Table 9 Birmingham: proportions of the Pakistani and White school workforce (2009) and pupil population (2011)

Ethnicity	Pupils (%)	Teachers (%)	Pupils (No)	Teachers (No)
White	37.9%	55.0%	65,835	4785
Pakistani/Kashmiri	24.5%	3.8%	42,558	335

2.11 Linking up the pupils' worlds

Some groups of pupils are said to do well in school because their cultures are congruent with the culture of the school while others perform badly because of the discontinuities between their home and school (Ogbu, 1982). Here minority communities and their children can experience discontinuities because what counts as education in the dominant society may be different from how they see education (Markose, 2008) and their lower SES can be a major determinant of home school relations (Lareau & Horvat, 1999). Parents in deprived families have been known to lack the ability and the resources necessary to provide their children a stimulating home learning environment. Middle class parents are said to have the know-how needed to take advantage of the education system, given they are from a similar background as many of the teachers, school is likely to be a friendlier place for them (Whitty, 2001; Byrne, 2009). Working class parents, on the other hand, are prone to defer to the superior knowledge and status of teachers and are inclined to leave the child's education to the school (Evans, 2007; Demie & Lewis, 2010). For Goodall (2012), when working with parents, schools' expectations are those of the dominant, (White) middle class, culture while for Crozier (1999a) working class parents tend to be more distant from the school due to its own culture and discourses. For minority parents, the deracialisation of parental involvement compounded the exclusion they faced from schools.

While the majority of Pakistanis are from lower SES, a growing number are described as middle class. Archer (2010) has pointed out that such parents echo White middle-class parents in their active involvement in the school and their potential to be 'angry parents' (Ranson et al., 2004) 'storming' into schools to challenge teachers and headteachers.

The Bullock Report (1975), cited earlier, had made a case for connecting children's school lives with those lived outside. And yet, for Coles (2004), this is exactly what happens for Muslim children. He pointed out that Muslim pupils are required to leave their religion at home because so often the school is simply unaware of the centrality of Islam in the life of its Muslim pupils. Many teachers do not feel equipped to help steer their pupils through the complicated Islamic minefield. Richardson and Wood (2004) spoke of disjointed lives of Pakistani young people; there was little or no link between their home, school and their learning at the mosque. They illustrated the situation as a triangle whose three corner points were not joined up. Sahin (2013) similarly spoke of the conflicting demands and expectations of the culture of the Muslim child's home, mosque, secular multicultural life and peer group.

Rhamie and Hallam (2002) stressed the importance of joining pupils' worlds in order to create a common purpose, culture and values. Damon and Colby (1996) similarly pointed out the importance of all the people and institutions in a child's life to collaborate. Merry (2005) saw it important to create cultural coherence in young people's lives, which can aid children by "minimizing unnecessary cognitive dissonance in their early years" (p479). Ogbu (1982) spoke of the cultural discontinuity hypothesis, according to which some groups do well in school because their cultures are congruent with school culture while others do less well because of the distance between their school and home lives. Little systematic knowledge exists as to whether Pakistani boys in Birmingham lead 'disjointed' lives, making it necessary to gather data on this matter.

2.11.1 Home and school

It is commonly accepted that parents will need to support their children if the latter are to succeed at school (Strand, 2007). According to Desforjes and Abouchaar (2003), pupils' achievement is influenced by many people, including parents. For them, parental

involvement takes many forms including good parenting in the home and provision of a stable environment and has a significant positive effect on children's achievement. .

Melhuish et al. (2008) pointed out that what parents do at home is learnable. Michael et al. (2007) pointed out that family and community involvement in schools leads to improvements in academic achievement of students.

Effective home-school relationships has been cited as a protective factor (Callanan et al., 2009). For Deslandes (2001), home and school were spheres of influence for a child and interaction between the two was at an optimum when both functioned as genuine partners. For Wilson (2009), young people who perceived their parents to be monitoring their activities had higher levels of achievement.

Raihani and Gurr (2011) undertook a case study of an Australian Islamic school's strategies to involve parents in their children's education. The findings showed three 'types' of parents. The 'silent' type had a passive relationship with the teachers whom they respected and who they deferred to as experts. The 'managed' type were perceived as a threat to teachers' professionalism and thus needed to be carefully managed. The 'activist' parents were fully engaged and saw decision making in school as a joint venture between them and teachers as equals. For Lareau and Horvat (1999), the 'ideal' parent from a school's perspective is one who is positive but deferential. Crozier (2000) pointed out that schools are more accepting of White parents' assertiveness than minority ethnic parents. According to Warren et al. (2009), when working with parents, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, teachers can be guilty of exercising 'unilateral power' – power over the parents. It is possible that in Birmingham, there may be a case of teachers trying to slot middle class Pakistani parents into the 'silent' or 'managed' category but who, in reality see themselves as 'activist'. Furthermore, for

disadvantaged and less articulate Pakistani parents, teachers might be guilty of exercising unilateral power, instead of 'relational power' - power to get things done collectively. This and the 'storming parents' (Ranson et al., 2004), referred to above, may have been the cause of some of the problems surrounding the recent 'Trojan Horse' controversy. Could it be that schools and minority ethnic families were travelling on 'parallel tracks' when it comes to education priorities (Ran, 2001)?

2.11.2 Partnership between supplementary and mainstream schools

For the QCA (Qualifications Curriculum Agency), children's learning was a part of a bigger picture than school alone (Waters, 2007; Bartlet et al., 2008). It was the entire planned learning experience of a young person. This included the lessons that they had during the school day, but also recognised how much young people learnt from activities that take place out of school. They advised education practitioners and policy makers to 'join-up' the different elements of a child's learning life.

In this study, a key part of the 'big picture' are the madrassahs. However, based on my longstanding knowledge of Birmingham, generally there are few links between schools and madrassahs. There has been little research done which we can refer to, in order to understand the situation. An exception was the report by Roach and Sondhi (1997) whose findings showed that the relationships between state and supplementary schools was patchy and transactional in nature. Moreover, a number of the supplementary schools regarded the relationship as being exploitative. The approach taken by Hornsby (2005), a headteacher of a mainly Pakistani Birmingham school, was very much an exception but could offer a model of effective practice. He provided a list of questions for schools to use to help teachers gain a better understanding of madrassahs. I intend to find out whether there are links between the schools in my research and the madrassahs attended by their pupils.

It is worth asking whether some of what the boys do within the madrassah system could be delivered within the school's curriculum, such as teaching of Urdu, Arabic, and Islamic Studies. Gent (2011) asked whether a time will come when teachers from madrassahs and the state education sector would work together for mutual benefit. For him, a starting point might be the recognition of the legitimacy of the learning at madrassahs by the mainstream teachers, including the valuing of the achievements of Muslim students in areas like Quranic memorisation and recitation. Earlier, Gent (2006) made a case for collaboration between state schools and madrassahs. However, he warned against the dangers of the state education system setting out, with a 'colonial' mindset, to bring madrassahs 'up to scratch'. For him it was important to recognise that the two systems of education were different with their own distinct philosophies, strengths and weaknesses. He made a case for the state education sector to take a positive interest in the madrassah experiences of their Muslim pupils and suggested that structures be set up to facilitate cross-fertilisation of ideas and methods amongst madrassahs and between madrassahs and the state schools.

Hewer (2001) asked whether the mainstream sector could embrace "a religious ethos and an Islamic perspective as part of its strategy to raise the educational standards of children from disadvantaged minority communities (such as the Pakistanis)?" (p524). Lewis (2006) spoke of the potential of *imams*, mosque leaders, to act as providers of bridging capital between Muslim parents and local schools. Ipgrave et al. (2010) provide effective examples of state schools responding to the needs of Muslim communities. Richardson and Wood (2004) argued for greater integration of the different elements of

Muslim young people's lives and suggested a joining-up of what they do at school with their lives at home and at the mosque.

Halstead (2007) and Shah (2008) pointed out the potential of Islam in the teaching of moral education for Muslim majority schools. Robertson (2006) stressed the importance for schools to build on the wider cultural and linguistic heritage of their children. However, she accepted that, in order to build on pupils' strengths, interest and experiences, the teachers would need to know what they were. Cherti and Bradley (2011) reported that where links between schools and madrassahs existed it had significant advantages for children and improved relations with the local community. For example, one madrassah had suspended classes to support the local schools when key stage tests were being conducted, allowing children to spend time with revision. In turn, the schools closed at the Muslim festival of Eid so that families could celebrate together. Pupil attendance and behaviour had improved in the schools, leading to higher levels of attainment.

2.12 Conclusion

This chapter has helped to identify a number of issues which point to the research that needs to be undertaken. Although the White British - Pakistani achievement gap reduces as pupils progress through the system, on average there is still a gap at age 16. SES is strongly associated with educational achievement. However, this impacts differently on ethnic minorities. There are a number of protective factors within the Pakistani community which support relatively high achievement of low SES Pakistani children relative to their low SES White British peers, but a Pakistani achievement gap remains overall. SES also determines parental strategies in the upbringing of their children and how they are prepared for education.

It has been shown that Muslims (such as Pakistanis) value education but they also wish to maintain their religion. Recognising the gaps in the state system parents supplement the education through provision at madrassahs. However, this provision has been found to be inadequate. It also impacts negatively on the children's education. It takes them away from participation in extra-curricular activities and 'intervention' classes thus depriving them of the resulting benefits of such provision.

The literature review has shown that homework plays an important role in children's education. However, it could be a problem for Pakistani children due to their madrassah attendance and their parents' low education. Teacher understanding of pupils' background is considered to be important as is the ethnic makeup of the teaching workforce.

2.13 Research questions

The following questions, which have arisen from the above literature review, will be used to gather data for the study.

2.13.1 Overall Research Question

What factors underlie variation in educational achievement among Pakistani boys in Birmingham? Might any of these factors contribute to an achievement gap relative to White British students?

2.13.1.1 Sub-questions

1. How does SES impact on Pakistani boys' educational outcomes and processes?
2. How does religion impact on Pakistani boys' educational outcomes and processes?
- 2.1. Do the boys attend madrassah?

2.2. How does madrassah attendance impact on the boys' educational outcomes and processes?

2.3. What do parents want from education for their children?

3. How do school and/or teacher factors impact on Pakistani boys' educational outcomes and processes?

3.1. What do Pakistani boys and parents think are important qualities in a teacher (e.g. ethnic match, cultural understanding etc)

3.2 How do schools seek to accommodate the cultural heritage of Pakistani boys (e.g. religion observance etc).

Chapter 3: THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

I start this chapter by describing the research methods employed in the study. I then consider the issue of reliability and validity. This is followed by a look at the pilot process and a consideration of reflexivity. I explore the power dynamics involved in conducting research and discuss the contested subject of ‘insider-outsider’ within research, including describing my own position. Following an exploration of research ethics, I focus on the matter of cultural competence when conducting research, especially in relation to religious sensibilities. I explain the research design of the study. I provide an outline of the research context and the school sites. I conclude the chapter by describing the data analysis and writing process.

3.2 A mixed-methods study

It has been argued that all social research is a form of participant observation, because we cannot study the social world without being a part of it (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Newby (2010) has advised that the researcher should become a “resource yourself” (p152). Others have similarly stressed the importance of using what one knows already. For Riemer (1977), social science researchers “... often ignore or treat as ancillary their own unique biographies, life experiences, and situational familiarity when these could opportunistically serve as important sources for research ideas and data” (p467). He pointed to a number of advantages of this ‘opportunistic research’, such as gaining access to the research setting, developing a rapport between the investigator and the persons being studied and being able to more accurately interpret the data. Mills (1959) spoke of our ‘sociological imagination’ and suggested to the researcher to use their life experience. The above encouraged me to make use of the vast array of data I

have gathered over many years of living and working in Birmingham. Such knowledge, described by Friedman (1990) as ‘autobiographical sociology’, “highlights the sociological insights gained through autobiographical experience and information” (p61). Taking this approach enables one to utilise sociological perspectives and ideas which arise out of one’s own life experiences and events and which are made sense of within the context of one’s own history.

In my previous work as a Diversity Consultant, on numerous occasions, I had utilised qualitative methods such as interviews and focus groups. Through this I had learnt that such methods were a good way for participants to tell their story, from their own point of view (Newby, 2010). In my research into the educational achievement of White working class, I had gained some experience of quantitative data. So, following advice (Bryman, 2006; Robson 2011), I employed a mixed methods approach in the current study. I saw quantitative method as a way to gather, systematically, responses from a larger number of people and qualitative methods to paint a picture of the phenomenon under investigation by taking a more focussed look at a smaller group. Through my professional experience I have discovered that qualitative methods help to put ‘meat on the bones’ of otherwise dry statistics and enable the researcher to probe at a deeper level people’s views and experiences. Such methods are also said to “encourage participants to introduce the factors that they perceive to be important and relevant, allowing new constructs to emerge that are not constrained by the researcher” (Knight et al. 2003, p.309).

3.2.1 Type of mixed design

Leech and Onwugbuzie (2009) have pointed out that mixed methods research involves collecting, analysing and interpreting quantitative and qualitative data in a single study.

According to them a “fully mixed concurrent equal status design involves conducting a study that mixes qualitative and quantitative research” (p270). For them such concurrence occurred within one or more of the components: the research objective, type of data, type of analysis, and type of inference. Bryman (2006) poses a number of questions which have been helpful in shaping the type of mixed design I would employ. He asks whether the quantitative and qualitative data are collected simultaneously or sequentially; which has priority; what is the function of the integration and at what stage(s) in the research process does multi-strategy research occur? Creswell (2014) spoke of convergent parallel mixed methods where data were collected as a parallel exercise, then analysed and interpreted together.

Koskey and Stewart (2014) spoke of a concurrent mixed methods design where quantitative and qualitative approaches are implemented concurrently. I decided to employ such a design. I recognised that, in the fast changing world of schools, teachers are busy with their main task of educating young people. I was conscious of this, having worked with schools over many years, as well as through my current role as a board member of a multi-academy trust. I knew I had a very short window of access to the schools during which I had to conduct all my research. This, therefore, led me to gather both my quantitative and qualitative data simultaneously, rather than employing a sequential mixed-methods approach which would have spread over a longer time period.

The data from the two methods were used together to form results and the timing was to look at both databases concurrently (Creswell, 2014). At the data analysis stage, the two methods were analysed separately as well as together, in order to compare and

contrast the responses. The quantitative and qualitative data held equal status throughout the collection, analysis, and interpretation stages.

3.3 Reliability and validity

In research we are expected to generate some new knowledge in order to make a difference to the world around us. We are also setting out in the rigorous pursuit of truth and the limitation of error, in the hope of being able to persuade our audiences of the credibility and trustworthiness of the research and its findings. Reliability and validity are ways of achieving such an aim. Heale and Twycross (2015) have provided a useful summary of what is meant by reliability and validity. For them, reliability describes how far a particular research tool, such as a questionnaire, will produce similar results in different situations. If the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable. Validity refers to the credibility or believability of the research. It is about closeness of what we believe we are measuring to what we intended to measure and how truthful the research results are. If the validity or trustworthiness can be maximised or tested then more credible and defensible the results will be.

The process to achieve reliability and validity includes a number of features: reviewing of existing literature and generating the questions we wish to find answers for; how data are collected, analysed and the conclusions that are drawn from the research. According to a number of key writers and researchers on the subject (Guba, 1981; Kvale, 1995), any study should aspire for trustworthiness; in other words how can a researcher persuade his or her audience that the research findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to. Golafshani (2003) focused particularly on qualitative studies. Between them they emphasise concepts such as credibility, neutrality, confirmability, applicability,

generalisability and transferability. The concepts apply equally to different methods of research even though they may be labelled differently. In the sections that follow I shall discuss how I have addressed these terms.

Triangulation is typically a strategy for improving the validity and reliability of research or evaluation of findings. It is a way of combining methods in order to provide the required data. It is “where researchers search for convergence among multiple and different sources of information to form themes or categories in a study. The term comes from military navigation at sea where sailors triangulated among different distant points to determine their ship's bearing” (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p. 126). For Bryman (2006), triangulation through the use of utilising mixed methods, such as what I have done in this study, is another way of striving for greater validity and enhancing the credibility of the research and integrity of the resulting data. Such an approach allows the researcher to draw on the strengths of the differing methods and offset their weaknesses. The researcher is also able to bring together a more comprehensive account of the area of enquiry; use one method to explain findings generated by the other and provide contextual understanding (with the help of qualitative methods) for the data gathered (through quantitative methods).

3.3.1 Bias and neutrality

Freire (1985) had said that remaining neutral in a conflict between the powerful and the powerless actually meant to side with the powerful, not to be neutral while Becker (1966) pointed out that taking sides in research is a given "since we inevitably will" (p239). For Lather (1986), research was an emancipation tool and there was no such thing as neutral research. Others have similarly taken the view that it is impossible to be totally value-free in research since it is carried out by humans who have their own biases and prejudices and enter the research field with preconceived notions about the context

and the participants (Reinharz, 1979; Liebling, 2001; Basit, 2010). This makes it necessary to practise reflexivity (Basit 2010), which entails reflection, introspection and critical self-analysis during the research. It involves examining the ways in which the researcher's identity influences the gathering of data and its interpretation. Rather than claiming complete objectivity, it is considered important that we acknowledge that our own background and experiences impinge on the research process and its findings. We have an ethical responsibility to be honest about our own beliefs and biases and their influence on our research. It is reasonable to argue that the realities and truths we are likely to propound as researchers are our own version of reality and truth.

Given that complete objectivity or neutrality are not possible, we should recognise our biases at every stage of the investigation and employ strategies to reduce them. Where there are multiple arguments offered in published research or in the data that result from my own research then I shall endeavour to present the different positions and offer evidence in justification (Gomm, 1995).

It is my hope to critique the status quo (Lather, 1986) in order to promote greater justice for young Pakistanis and their communities. It may be an unrealistic undertaking to set out to achieve what Horkheimer said: "to liberate human beings from the circumstances that enslave them"(Newby, 2010, p40), but I am aware that having my numerous qualifications bestows a certain level of responsibility on my shoulders. Given that knowledge creates privilege (Sivanandan, 1982) I am conscious of my position in having this opportunity to study at a research intensive university. I hope I can use the research process to empower and 'conscientise' (Freire, 1973) the Pakistani community. Furthermore, I hope my research will act as a 'catalyst' (Lather, 1986) to policy change

and more effective practice which, in the end, leads to improvements in educational provision for Pakistani children.

We need to remember that research regarded as worthwhile is expected to be objective and generalisable. Reinharz (1979) has argued that one's personal values affect all stages of research, from deciding on the topic of research, gathering the data and writing the report. She recommended that in our efforts to produce social knowledge that will advance the struggle for a more equitable world we must pursue rigour as well as relevance. Blair (2004) considered it necessary for researchers to have integrity and to demonstrate rigour in their work. I shall, therefore, aim for transparency at all stages of my work and keep an open mind so that I hear perspectives which may be different to my own, including those which may challenge my position.

The most practical way of achieving greater validity is to minimise the amount of bias as much as possible (Cohen & Manion, 1994). Such bias can result from the attitudes and opinions of the interviewer. I guarded against this happening by consciously avoiding seeing the respondents in my own image or to seek answers that support my preconceived notions.

In the interviews, I tried not to influence the interview respondents by remaining neutral. There were no obvious ways for them to 'perform' or to show themselves in a good light or to be unduly helpful by attempting to anticipate what I as the interviewer wanted to hear. I genuinely wanted to hear their honest opinions and for me there were no right or wrong questions; all responses were useful and welcome. Although I asked many open-ended questions I did not attempt to summarise responses in the course of the interview. According to Cohen and Manion (1994) here bias can enter the process,

which I wished to avoid, "because the interviewer may unconsciously emphasize responses that agree with her expectations and fail to note those that do not (p283). BERA (2011) had flagged up the potential problems which can arise from teachers conducting research in a school setting where students may try to please them by giving them the 'right' responses. While I was not a teacher in the schools being researched, I made sure my interview subjects (especially the students and parents) were fully aware of this.

Given that much of my data resulted from self-reporting, it was possible that some of the answers were what respondents felt were expected. Therefore, I triangulated the resulting data, as far as I possibly could. As well as method triangulation, I was able to achieve the same aim through 'sample triangulation' where I posed the same questions to multiple audience in order to ensure that the conclusions drawn are valid, reliable and dependable. This enabled me to illuminate the same issues from three different perspectives - students, parents and teachers. Basit (2010) has referred to this as 'concurrent validity'. This can be seen in the case of religion. There was much support from the literature as to the importance of religion. In the questionnaire for Pakistani students religion was the most important, of all ethnic groups. The importance was supported by the evidence gathered through interviews, i.e. its manifestation in the madarssah attendance. Within the questionnaire itself this was supported by the response to questions on importance for teachers to have religious understanding and the expression of desire by the students to have Muslim teachers.

3.3.2 Pilot process

Researchers are advised to pilot their research by a similarly structured group to the research sample. This is another way to achieve a process that is 'fit for purpose' and helps towards the reliability of the study. Following advice from Cohen et al (2007), it is

an opportunity to test the clarity of the questions, remove any ambiguities and check the time it would take to complete questionnaire and interviews. In order to achieve this, I was able to enlist the support of 4 boys to complete the questionnaire. They were a mixture of Year 11 and some who had recently left school. They belonged to different ethnicities. I also interviewed one Pakistani boy, one Pakistani parent and one Pakistani teacher.

The pilot process was found to be beneficial. It helped to confirm that the questions were clear and there appeared to be no ambiguities. It also helped to know the time it would take for the completion of the questionnaire and interviews. I discovered that I needed just over half an hour for the interview with the boys; initially I had thought it would take longer. This was quite helpful as in one of the schools – Grammar – I was told I only had half an hour with each boy. I further learnt that it would take around forty five minutes for the interview with the teacher and the parent. During this process I learnt that the questionnaire would take about eight minutes to complete. Schools were informed of this so they could decide the best time-slot for their students.

During the discussion Pilot Teacher Tariq explained that he had a good level of understanding of the Pakistani pupils' background:

...probably because of my own background; my parents are Pakistani. I have spent most of my life here in the UK and have visited Pakistan a few times. Through living amongst the Pakistani community, I have picked up my knowledge. The Pakistani culture is so broad but you pick up little nuances, the differences, as you live your life. So broadly speaking I would say, yes, I do understand the community.

I asked him whether he thought it was important for teachers to have such understanding. He responded:

It is (original emphasis). It is massively important, when working with the young people. It is important to have the understanding, when there's a problem and when there isn't a problem. You know in general conversation, when you've got a way into their world, when you know what it's like to be a Pakistani boy...

I asked him to explain to me the difference such understanding would make, to which he responded:

For people who work with the boys, for the professionals, having that understanding; why there might be certain problems, why a pupil might be manifesting certain behaviours, in certain way, its massively helpful and useful.

This interview during the pilot process was key to my realisation of the importance of interviewing at least one Pakistani teacher in each of the schools.

3.3.3 Reflexivity

Reflexivity is a further procedure for researchers to achieve validity in their research.

This is an opportunity for researchers to self-disclose their biases and acknowledge that we have allegiance to certain beliefs, values and traditions (Griffiths, 1998).

According to Basit (2010), reflexivity entails reflection, introspection and critical self-analysis during the research. It engages the researchers in acknowledging and examining their subjectivities, based on their background, prior knowledge and experiences.

Elsewhere, (Basit, 2013), she has explained that reflexivity “involves looking back at our

practices and cogitating and pondering the decisions we had made to see if our choices were correct or whether we could have operated differently” (p509). For her, taking such steps enables researchers to examine the ways in which their identity influences how the data are gathered and the social world is portrayed. It leads them to recognise the likely impact of their biases on all aspects of the research. Therefore, researchers are advised to ponder such matters as their own journey, what they want to investigate and the methods they will employ as well as the whole process of examining the phenomena and why this will be the best possible way of carrying out this research. For Basit (2010) and Ahern (1999), the ultimate aim is to carry out research in an ethical manner. They advise that one needs to guard against taking views and perspectives for granted and to aim for objectivity by clarifying one’s value systems and subjectivities.

Whenever one enters a professional relationship, such as between a researcher and the people being researched, it is necessary to be aware of the power dynamics between the parties (Fontes, 1998; Shah, 2004; Das, 2010). There can be a power imbalance, for example, where an adult is interviewing young people. Shaw et al. (2011) pointed out that while such power imbalance can never be eliminated, it can be minimised. They suggested that one should create a relaxed atmosphere, ensure that the young people understand that their participation is voluntary and that they can withdraw at any time. In my research, this was made clear to the young people and their own and their parents’ consent was obtained.

Power imbalance could be said to be at play when interviewing parents, especially those with little or no education. In my research with Pakistani parents, while there was ‘race matching’ (Rhodes, 1994), between us, it would be too simplistic to say that this had dealt with the imbalance. Mindful of my advantaged position as an educated

professional, I took a number of steps to compensate for my higher status. I met the parents at their home, that is, in a place where they were in control. Brown and Tandon (1978) spoke of the 'rapport effect', the development of trust between two people who may not have met before. For them, such trust and rapport promotes frank answers to interview questions. They suggest that researchers should respond neutrally, avoid leading questions, and lead up to sensitive material with less threatening questions.

I am experienced at conducting business meetings and conversations within informal settings. Therefore, when interviewing the parents, I was able to maintain a business-like distance; not allowing myself to get too close to them but stay focussed on the task at hand. I aimed to avoid talking about our families' origins or stories, as is sometime the practice when two Pakistanis meet. This also meant that they would not be worried that I might break confidentiality and discuss what they share during the interview with others in our likely mutual network. I wanted to be pleasant while keeping a sense of formality. I dressed in smart clothes; though not overly formal (such as jacket and tie) nor too informal (such as jeans the Pakistani *kameez* and *shalwar*).

3.5 Insider-outsider role in research

Who we are as researchers is intertwined with our personal and professional identities. The identities are said to be multi-faceted (Fontes, 1998). The debate on who is qualified to research whom is particularly well-rehearsed; in terms of gender (Stacey, 1988; Ramazanoglu, 1992; Hammersley, 1994), race (Rhodes, 1994) and social class (Mellor et al., 2013). However, it remains a contested issue, with the debate being “multidimensional, continuous and inclusive” (Shah, 2004, p556). A researcher focusing on people of the community he is also a member of is described as an ‘insider’; the opposite is an ‘outsider’.

It is worth pointing out that, just being a co-ethnic with the people one is researching, it is not sufficient to make one an insider. Nor is the possibility ruled out, forever. So, people of the same heritage may in some situations be alike while in other situations be different (Ali & Holden, 2006).

Given the unique ways in which our lives progress, our initial commonalities, such as sharing the same heritage, can become less significant and, in their place, differences come into greater prominence. We develop 'multiple identities' (Sen, 2006) which provide us a menu to choose from in any given context. According to Reich and Reich (2006) 'culture' is a broad category. Although, we may belong to the same cultural group and be similar to one another in some ways but may become dissimilar in other ways. For Griffiths (1998), none of us is a "complete insider or outsider". Relevant also to the study at hand maybe the concepts 'outsider within' (Watts 2006) and 'relative insiders' (Collins 1990; Griffiths, 1998). Shah (2006), a British Indian professional disabled woman, expecting herself to be an insider when researching disabled people, realised that only a part of her life history resembled that of her respondents. Mellor et al. (2013) also make a similar point when discussing the issue of working class researchers studying working class people and expecting somehow to be insiders. They concluded that shared class position does not necessarily equate with similar life experiences, or enable a strong rapport with, or understanding of, working-class people's lives.

Song and Parker (1995) spoke of the limitations of the insider-outsider binary and advised against applying too rigidly the commonalities and differences between the researchers and their target audience. For them a diversity of experience, involving many different types of differences, can be found in such encounters. They spoke of

cultural differences which may exist between the interviewer and interviewees in spite of their membership of the same racial or national group. For them, researchers were neither total insiders nor total outsiders. Spalek (2008) spoke of 'multiple identities' of researchers, so that while "some aspects of their identities might help them to establish rapport and trust and to gain access to research participants, other aspects of their identities may work against them" (p.73). Deutsch (1981) has similarly spoken of 'multiple insiders and outsiders'.

Shared identities, between researcher and the researched, are said to bring certain benefits such as facilitating access to certain groups and engendering trust and a willingness to discuss certain issues (Francis & Archer, 2005). According to Shah (2004), it is advantageous throughout the research process – access, conducting interview and making meaning - for the researcher to understand their respondents' culture. For her, the insider-researcher is "better positioned to understand responses and to make meaning as a participative activity" (p564) and that "a cultural insider has a definite advantage of 'shared cultural experience', which facilitates understanding and interpretation of what the research participants share" (p569). Abbas (2002) pointed out that a researcher with shared ethnic characteristics was less likely to pathologise or stereotype and more likely to remain 'ethnically correct'. Archer (2002) suggested that responses given by ethnic minority respondents to White interviewees may be less valid, compared with those given to interviewers of their own ethnicity. She pointed to the possibility that cultural differences between researchers and participants may lead to the researcher being unable to generate 'meaningful' data, due to not having a shared understandings and cultural knowledge of the participants.

Being a partial-insider/outsider can have its advantages too. For Shah (2006), parts of our life history may resemble that of the respondents, yet allowing us to be different and 'outsider' enough from that so that we are able to retain a fair level of objectivity.

Griffiths (1998) pointed out that relative insiders have to face the charge that they are too distanced from the community which they have researched. For Bondi (2003), on the other hand, being a partial-insider is advantageous. It enables the interviewer to be emotionally present and reactive to the interviewees' responses while simultaneously staying in touch with, and reflecting on their own feelings. In this way, there is not a danger of the interviewer becoming unconsciously overwhelmed by the respondents' stories reacting to, rather than reflecting on, what is going on, and blurring the interviewer/interviewee boundary.

Being an insider-researcher can have problems too. For Kanuha (2000), while one is able to "enhance the depth and breadth of understanding a population that may not be accessible to a non-native scientist, questions about objectivity, reflexivity, and authenticity of a research project are raised because perhaps one knows too much or is too close to the project and may be too similar to those being studied" (p444). Francis and Archer (2005) warned of the dangers that researchers from similar social positions as their respondents might conflate experiences or distort responses in order to fit their own experiences. For Reay (1996), the closer we are to the subject matter, the more likely our beliefs would influence the shape of our work, the questions we pose and the way we interpret the responses.

Peshkin (1988) has drawn attention to the problem of subjectivity which, according to him, operates during the entire research process, or as he describes it, "one's subjectivity is like a garment that cannot be removed" (p17). For him, the only option is for the

researcher to become aware of their subjectivity. Dimmock (2002) made a case that it was better for a researcher to be an outsider as it can help bring a fresh perspective to the situation being studied.

3.5.1 Me and my position

With the above discussion as a backdrop, I would describe myself as a ‘relative insider’/ ‘outsider-within’. One advantage of my particular life trajectory – working class who became middle class while maintaining close ties with the working class in the Pakistani community - was that it enabled me to build rapport with parents from very different education and social class backgrounds; from the doctors and business parents living in big houses as well as the labouring parents in their low-paid factory jobs.

My life’s journey and my professional trajectory has placed me in various locations along the insider-outsider continuum. Having begun as an insider, I became an outsider. I then decided to ‘go back home’ for the research, applying an outsider’s perspective to the situation on the inside. While not becoming an outsider even if it were possible, I certainly wish to bring a fresh perspective as far as possible.

Reay (1996) drew attention to problems associated with men interviewing women, including, as in the present study, the particular issues surrounding an Asian male researcher interviewing Asian female participants. However, Abbas (2002), a Pakistani male, who had conducted his research amongst Pakistani Muslims and other Asians in Birmingham had found no such problems with interviewing Muslim females. Following his experience, I expected there to be no problems and, as far as I am aware, I did not encounter any. During my interviews with the Pakistani female parents, although I was conscious of our gender differences, I believe it did not create any barrier of communication. It certainly appeared to make little difference when interviewing female

teachers, where the focus appeared to be on a professional, rather than gender-based, encounter.

3.6 Ethics and culturally competent research

Before the commencement of the research, ethical approval had been obtained from University of Warwick according to the BERA framework (BERA, 2011). The Association's guidelines make a catch-all statement on the importance of educational researchers operating within an ethic of respect and the need to treat individuals fairly, sensitively, with dignity, and within an ethic of respect and freedom from prejudice.

The research encounter requires a certain level of cultural competency and sensitivity on the part of the researcher (Das, 2010). For Colombo (2005) cultural competence is the ability to understand diverse perspectives and appropriately interact with members of other cultures. Atim and Cantu (2010) described cultural competence as the ability of researchers to take “into account the culture and diversity of a population when developing research ideas, conducting research, and exploring applicability of research findings (p6)”. Das (2010) has drawn attention to the potential for exploitation, while Briscoe et al. (2003) have reminded us that “the goal of culturally competent research – or culturally competent intervention – is to always preserve and enhance the interests, dignity and integrities (of people being researched)” (p11). They also advised researchers wishing to adopt a culturally competent perspective to investigate their own beliefs, knowledge, and information about the community being studied. Stuart (2004) suggested that researchers should develop skills in discovering the unique cultural outlook of the researched; acknowledge and control personal biases; develop sensitivity to cultural differences and show respect for the beliefs of the researched.

I was mindful that there was likely to be wide diversity amongst the parents I was interviewing, in terms of their level of education and social class. I consciously tried to be adaptable, depending on which parent I was meeting. I was conscious of having the linguistic and cultural 'equipment' (Rhodes, 1994) which a non-Pakistani or even a non-Urdu speaking Pakistani may not have had. During the interviews there were occasions when such linguistic connection enabled me to reach a deeper level of understanding or quickly pick up on the linguistic clues. For example, very early on, one of the parents used the phrase 'deen aur dunya', meaning religion and 'of the world'. It is likely that he may not have used the phrase with a cultural or linguistic outsider. Where I spoke English during parent interviews, then this was free of jargon. If mother tongue was spoken then this was the 'common and accessible' variety, including dialects as opposed to 'educated and complex' Urdu. Where the interview was conducted in English I used the occasional Urdu words, in order to both optimise the level of understanding and to "establish and maintain a good rapport with the interviewee." (Cohen et al., 2007, p362). Academy parent Najeeb, who sounded quite well educated, explained to me that he had participated on school governing bodies at his children's schools but had found English language was a barrier (see Cox, 2001).

I frequently felt unable to participate in meetings. I could understand what was going on but it was hard to contribute to the discussion. What might take someone with English half hour would take me forty five minutes. It was hard to find the right words to express myself. I could not speak fluently.

This was not something I had raised or invited him to discuss. So, it is unlikely that, with a non co-ethnic researcher, he might have raised this personal barrier.

Religion and culture are said to be closely interwoven (Halstead, 2007a). On a few occasions 'religio-cultural' (Abbas 2003)³¹ needs arose during my research which required an appropriate response from me as the researcher. For example, it became necessary to remove my shoes, in the hallway, before entering the parents' space for the interview. On other occasions, knowing that as a male researcher it would not be appropriate to do so, I did not offer to shake hands with the female parents interviewed. In most households, I was offered refreshments. Being prepared, I would always ask for a glass of water. In this situation it would have been rude not to accept a drink but would have taken time, away from the interview, to accept a hot drink. On a couple of occasions, a hot drink arrived without me being asked. This I accepted; not to do so would have been rude.

Being aware of my 'insider-outsider' position in relation to the Birmingham Pakistani community, to each interview with a parent, I went prepared with a script for my encounter. It included the questions I had agreed with my supervisor. But my script also included: I must listen, not talk; I must be grateful to them for giving me their time and for inviting me into their space; I must show them respect, for their knowledge and opinions and that I must remain friendly, yet businesslike. I also had a script for what I would say to them when we first met; why I was there, the university where I was studying; that I was not from their son's school so they could speak freely. I also made sure that I reiterated the assurance on confidentiality. And the question: 'who are you?' I knew this would come up so I had a response already worked out. This was in multiple parts. Part one would be for when we first met. I had decided that beyond my name and where I was studying, I would say little else as I did not want to influence their thinking in any way. Being directive, I would attempt to, as quickly as possible, get started with

³¹ This demonstrates the inseparability of religion and culture.

the interview. Part two of the answer would be ready for the post-interview conversation, if it seemed necessary and if they were interested in my opinions and my background.

Henry (2003) asks: how can a researcher who exists on both the 'inside' and 'outside' of South Asian cultural identities simply label and name herself? Or occupy positions of power and privilege in the 'field'? I particularly needed a script for this part of the encounter with the interviewees. I knew I couldn't just walk away. I had to say something. But what would I say, how much, about which topics and which topics I would stay clear of? I knew if I did not have a mental script, things could go wrong here and I could start talking too much and about the wrong topics. So, as example, just as we finished the interview, one parent asked me to do a proper *tahaaraf*, introduction. So, I was able to oblige with further details of my background: which district of Kashmir I was born in (from the way I spoke, he had worked out that we were from the same region), how long I had been in Birmingham etc. It turned out that we had both attended the same school upon arrival in Birmingham. I was able to manage the discourse and conclude it appropriately and depart.

3.7 The research within its context

This study is being conducted within a particular context. By having some understanding of that context and its different levels (Ringeisen et al., 2003) would help to explain and understand the meaning being generated by the study. There are three levels for the study: the individuals (children, parents, teachers); the organisations (the schools) and the government (local and national). Outlined below are the third and second of these levels.

Birmingham City Council is the largest local authority in England with an estimated population of 274,478 children and young people (BCC, 2011). This represented around a quarter of the city's overall population. Of this, Pakistani children were the largest ethnic minority, at 24.5%, and Muslims the largest pupil religious group, at 36%. Within England, the LA has been reported to have the highest number of EAL children; "with 40% of the city's total 63,216 pupils not having English as their Mother Tongue" (McKinney, 2016, p11).

The Pakistani community in Birmingham is very large. They currently make up about fourteen per cent of the overall population of the city. The community is spread across the city, with at least ten percent Pakistanis present in half of the electoral wards (Iqbal, 2013). There is also diversity amongst the community; people originate from across Pakistan and in turn have settled in different parts of Birmingham. Therefore, in order to capture the heterogeneity of the community, I sought three secondary schools located in different parts of Birmingham.

Having worked as a Local Authority schools Adviser for ten years (2001-2011), I knew what different types of schools there were in the city; in terms of their social and ethnic make-up, type of school and their location in the city. Utilising this knowledge, I approached three schools. In my email to the headteachers I referred to my past research on the White working class young people and pointed out that my focus had now shifted to the education of Pakistani boys in the city. I explained that the research was a part of my PhD and, therefore, would be governed by the rigours of higher education and its rules on ethics and confidentiality. A timeline for the recruitment of schools and conducting the research is provided (Appendix 1).

3.7.1 Schools portraits

Given below are details of the three schools. Much of the information was drawn from their most recent Ofsted inspection report, with other data supplied by the schools themselves. Details of the three schools are also summarised in Table 10.

3.7.1.1 Academy

Academy is a large secondary school, offering education for 1500 children. The school is located in the South East of the city. It served its immediate locality but also attracted students from other areas of the city. The school had 27% FSM pupils. It had 29.3% Pakistani students. The school employed around 140 full-time equivalent staff, out of which 3.8% were Pakistani.

3.7.1.2 Community

Community is a large comprehensive school, offering education for 1500 children. It is located in the north of the city. The school had 44% FSM pupils. Almost all of the school's students were from ethnic minority backgrounds - 43.9% Pakistani and 35% Bangladeshi. The school staffing was diverse, of whom 8% were Pakistani.

3.7.1.3 Grammar

Grammar offers education for 1000 boys, who came from across the city as well as some who travelled in from neighbouring local authorities. Entry was through passing the 11+ test. 12.8% of the boys were Pakistani. Students joined the school with above average attainment. The proportion of FSM students was very low, at 6.5%. The majority of the school's staff were White British. It employed one, part-time (0.6% full-time equivalent), Pakistani member of staff.

Table 10 Schools as sites of research

School	Location/ recruitment	Type	Size	Pakistani pupils	FSM
Academy	South East Birmingham	11-18 semi-selective	1500 approx	29%	27%
Community	North of Birmingham	11-18 comprehensive	1500 approx	43.9%	44%
Grammar	City-wide	Selective	1000 approx	12.8%	6%

3.8 Research sample

Schools were asked for access to Year 11 students; all of them for the questionnaire and up to ten Pakistani boys to be interviewed, on a one-to-one basis. It was requested that the interviewees should be a mixture of abilities i.e. some who were expected to achieve the benchmark qualification and some who were not. I requested that some of these interviewees should be FSM. In addition, schools were asked to nominate two teachers who could be interviewed, if possible one of whom should be Pakistani. It was requested that one of the teachers should be someone who had a good understanding of Year11 pupils such as a Pastoral Head of Year. Schools were requested to put me in touch with parents of the boys being interviewed. The schools were supplied letters to the relevant people. Copies of these are provided in Appendix 2.

3.9 Conducting the research

In gathering primary data, I decided to utilise a questionnaire with all Y11 pupils and structured interviews, with Pakistani boys, their parents and teachers. I decided that gathering data from all pupils would provide me with an opportunity to compare and contrast Pakistani pupils with White pupils and any others as necessary.

3.9.1 Questionnaire

Table 11 Questionnaire summary data - four main ethnic groups

School	W %	P %	I %	B %	FSM %	Boys %	Girls %	No. for school
Academy	47	20	7	5	22	65	35	108
Community	0	43	9	39	41	61	39	44
Grammar	43	18	24	1	3	100	0	67
No overall	82	54	28	23	37	143	44	

Key: W (White), P (Pakistani), I (Indian), B (Bangladeshi)

The questionnaire consisted of 17 questions. The start of the questionnaire was designed to gather general data on pupil characteristics such as gender, ethnicity and their eligibility for free school meals. The remainder of the questionnaire had questions on the following:

- Home and family
- Attitudes to learning

- Religion
- Teachers
- Post-16 aspirations

Within the above categories, there were a number of statements, using a four-point Likert scale. The mid-point, neutral, option was not included in order to discourage the respondents to 'sit on the fence' (Cohen et al., 2007, p327). It also had a number of dichotomous and multiple choice questions. According to Newby (2010), "because self-completion questionnaires cannot probe respondents to find out just what they mean by particular responses, open-ended questions are a less satisfactory way of eliciting information"(p249). Therefore, such questions were kept to a minimum.

The questionnaire was designed to look "easy, attractive and interesting rather than complicated, unclear, forbidding and boring" (Newby, 2010, p258). It was administered electronically so I was able to make use of the design offered by Survey Monkey (www.surveymonkey.com). Following advice from Cohen et al. (2007) and Robson (2011), I tried to avoid certain pitfalls i.e. no leading, highbrow, complex or irritating questions. The language of the questions was kept simple yet not condescending. Questions were kept short. Jargon was avoided as were double-barrelled questions.

A total of 219 pupils, out of a possible 480, had completed the questionnaire; an overall response rate of 46%. They did so during normal lesson time. Through the Contact Teacher, the students were sent an email link to enable them to access the questionnaire. At appropriate intervals, the Contact Teachers were reminded to chase the pupils so to achieve the maximum respondents. Pupils at both Academy and Grammar had been asked by the tutors to complete the survey in good time before their exams. A 46%

return rate was achieved at Academy while a much higher, 74%, return rate was achieved at Grammar. At Community the response rate was only 29%. It was explained that it had been left too late and the students had left the school, in order to prepare for their exams. Table 11 provides a breakdown of the students from the four main ethnic groups completing the questionnaire across the three schools. A copy of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix 3.

3.9.2 Interviews

According to Cohen et al., the interview is a “social encounter, not simply a site for information exchange” (2007, p350). The effective interviewer for them was “not only knowledgeable about the subject matter but also an expert in interaction and communication. The interviewer would need to establish an appropriate atmosphere such that the participant can feel secure to talk freely.”(p361). Here, I was able to use my general communication skills, my ability to converse with diverse people, my professional knowledge - of education, especially within the Birmingham context and of the British Pakistani community – and experience, such as interviewing people in my role as a Diversity Consultant. This enabled me to structure the interviews appropriately, ask the right questions, offer the necessary prompts and explanations; with the clear aim of stimulating a response in order to achieve my goals.

For Robson (2011), the interview is a flexible and adaptable way of finding things out. “The human use of language is fascinating both as behaviour in its own right and for the virtually unique window that it opens on what lies behind our actions” (p280).

Following his advice, the interviewees were informed that the interview would take around 45 minutes. I generally managed to keep to this. As expected, on a few occasions, interviewees wished to talk, beyond the interview. Here, I was able to use my

skills to appropriately pull away without seeming rude. A phrase such as “I am sorry I have taken enough of your time already” often helped. I was also able to stick to Robson's advice i.e. ‘listen more than you speak’ (p282). If the interview was taking longer than planned and the process was generating useful data then it was worthwhile to continue.

Following advice from Lofland et al. (2006), at the start of the interview I thanked the interviewees for giving me their time and explained the purpose and nature of the study. I assured them that the data would be anonymised and that neither they, nor the school, would be identifiable in any reports generated and their responses would be treated in strictest confidence. This was particularly necessary within the Pakistani context where there can be a fear that information given may be shared with others in their community especially where the researcher is also a Pakistani.

During the interviews, most of the discussion was conducted with the aid of open-ended questions. Use was made of *funnels* and *filters* (Oppenheim, 1992: ch.7). For example, all students were asked: ‘Do you go to the mosque?’ If they answered ‘yes’ then there would be relevant follow-up questions e.g., how long they spent there, how often they went. If they said ‘no’ then they would be asked whether they had done so in the past.

Given that the encounter with teachers and students took place at their school, an environment familiar to them, there was little ‘settling in’ needed. All it required was for me was to thank them, explain what I was doing, the nature of the research being conducted and to reassure them of complete confidentiality. There was little extra effort involved for me, given that I had conducted many such one-to-one interviews, during

my many years as an education and equalities practitioner. The interviews with parents required a little more conscious preparation. Of particular relevance to my interviews were attributes of interviewers, drawn from ethnography, covering areas of trust, curiosity and naturalness (Woods 1986).

The foundations of the ‘relationship’ with the parents and the teachers were laid by the first communication they received from me, in the form of a letter which had been sent to all the likely research participants. The communication with student interviewees was through the Contact Teacher at the school. Although different letters were written to students, teachers and parents, they had the same basic information (who I was, what I was doing, details of my university affiliation and, for teachers and parents, my phone and email contact).

Table 12 Breakdown of qualitative data from 3 school sites of research

School	Interview, Pakistani boys	Interview, Pakistani parents	Interview, teachers	Totals
Academy	7	4	3	14
Community	10	7	7	24
Grammar	7	5	2	14
Totals	24	16	12	52

3.9.2.1 Interviewing the boys

In all three schools, I was allocated a quiet room for the interviews. The boys appeared at regular intervals according to the timetable that had been drawn up. Where they failed to attend such as through absence from school, they were rescheduled. All interviewees were happy for the interview to be audio-recorded.

At the start of each interview, during the settling in process, I would check to make sure the boys understood who I was and what I was doing, namely: that I was not a teacher but a researcher - explaining what PhD meant – and that I would keep all information confidential, by using pseudonyms for schools and interviewees.

3.9.2.2 Accessing the parents

When I met the boys, I asked them if they thought their parents would be happy to be interviewed, explaining that I would conduct the interview at a place, time and in a language of the parents' choosing.

Most of the boys said that their parents would be happy to be interviewed. In this case, I asked the boys for the parents' contact details. One school, Community, provided me with a chart containing the name and address of the pupils, parents' names and contact number.

At the end of the interview, I would ask the boys to let their parents know that I would be contacting them to arrange an interview. I would reiterate that the anonymity for the parents would be the same. Here, I also explained that I would not divulge the boys',

their parents' or the real names of the schools amongst my family, friends or the wider community so that no one would know the true identity of who had been interviewed and which school they attended.

Expecting the boys to go home and talk about the interview, I phoned the parents the same day or soon after, while the subject was fresh for them. By this stage, I had already established, through the students, whether the parents would prefer speaking in English or Urdu. The phone call to parents offered a further opportunity to develop my relationship with them. It was likely that, having signed the consent form for their son, they would remember who I was and the research I was conducting.

In conducting the parental interviews, I met the parents in their homes, at a time of their choosing. Two interviews were conducted on Saturday afternoons. Most of the rest of the interviews were conducted during the week at daytime and a few were conducted in the evening.

In terms of the language used at the interview, 2 of the 4 parent interviews at Academy were conducted in their mother tongue; one in Pahari and one in Punjabi. 4 of the 7 parent interviews at Community were conducted in their mother tongue; 2 in Pahari and 2 in Punjabi. All interviews with parents at Grammar were conducted in English. The language of the interview was an indicator of the parents' level of education; the more educated were likely to be more confident in their ability to speak English.

3.9.2.3 Interviewing the teachers

The schools provided two or more teachers for the interviews. At Community, I was also able to make use of interviews with four other members of staff which had been conducted as a part of a consultancy assignment I was undertaking at the school.

Between the three schools, in total, I conducted 52 one-to-one interviews - 24 Pakistani boys; 16 parents; and 12 teachers, 4 of whom were of Pakistani heritage.

Of the boys interviewed, 8 were FSM and 16 not-FSM. All the FSM were expected by their school to achieve 5+ A*-C, including English and maths; 13 of the not-FSM were similarly expected to achieve 5+ A*-C while 3 not-FSM were not expected to achieve 5+ A*-C. Table 12 provides a breakdown of interviewees across the three schools. A full breakdown of the interviewees is provided in Appendix 4. The interview schedule for interviews with pupils, parents and teachers is provided in Appendix 5.

3.10 Pakistani diversity within the sample

I managed to achieve the diversity I set out to do, amongst the Pakistani community, as indicated by the make-up of the parents interviewed. During my meetings I was able to gather that amongst the sample of 16 interviewees the following Pakistani towns and cities were represented as places of origin for the interviewees:

- Faisalabad (1)
- Gujar Khan (2)
- Gujrat (1)
- Gurgushti (1)

- Jehlum – ex-Mirpur³² (1)
- Kashmir (6)
- Lahore (2)
- Lala Moosa – ex-Mirpur (1)
- Multan (1)

3.11 Making sense of the data

In the context of my research, the analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data were considered of equal importance (Cohen et al., 2007). I interrogated both the questionnaire and the interviews in order to draw out trends in what the respondents were saying.

The questionnaire responses from students needed to be considered in terms of percentages of pupils who gave a particular response. I needed to compare responses between boys and girls and to see how different ethnic groups responded to particular questions. I was able to make use of the analysis facility offered by the SurveyMonkey website, whose questionnaire design I had used. In addition, I undertook some additional manual analysis, such as working out percentages, combining data, such as agree/strongly agree or disagree/strongly disagree.

The analysis of the qualitative data was a bigger challenge. The task facing me was what to do with interview responses from over fifty people, which had resulted in some 150 pages of content.

³² Ex-Mirpur parents had been displaced by the building of the Mangla Dam.

A number of authors have provided useful advice on how to make sense of qualitative data. For Cohen et al. (2007), "qualitative data analysis involves organising, accounting for and explaining the data; in short, making sense of data in terms of the participants' definitions of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities" (p461). They also state that there is no one single or correct way to analyse and present qualitative data. According to Basit (2003), most qualitative researchers analyse their own data and we are encouraged to draw on whatever understanding of analysis we bring from our previous work and the conventions of our respective disciplines and professions. This enabled me to work out my own method for analysis and draw on my many consultancy assignments where I had undertaken qualitative research. I found that the data analysis was not a discrete procedure carried out at the final stages of research but something that began with the interview and continued throughout the life of the study. The data gathered through the interviews were personal to me. It felt I had entered into a relationship, with my subjects, through the interview meeting which had continued beyond, as I transcribed, analysed and interpreted what had been shared by the interviewees. I did not take short cuts but allowed plenty of time and energy to the task. As I listened to the interviews many times during the analysis, it became an enjoyable activity.

Lofland et al. (2006) suggest that the researcher should undertake an initial read through text data, identify specific segments of information, label the segments to create categories, reduce overlap and redundancy among the categories and create a model incorporating most important categories. For me, the process began with the literature review which had given rise to a number of questions which I felt required to be answered for Pakistani boys. It could be argued that a process had gone on even before the literature review which had helped me to decide what to read and why but that

would mean writing a full personal and professional autobiography, something neither possible nor necessary here.

The resulting questions were ordered according to my experience of such situations e.g. settling in/opening; the main body; concluding and then post-conclusion e.g. 'Is there anything else you would like to say?' My experience had shown that often this question can generate extremely useful data. It can also place the interviewees in a more powerful role as they have the opportunity to give an opinion about any of the issues under discussion.

All interviews were recorded on a PearlCorder Dictaphone which would usually be placed on a table in front of the interviewee. Following advice from Lofland et al. (2006), I decided to transcribe the interviews myself. I felt quite possessive of the humans and their voices, inside the tape recorder. I set out to systematically listen to the interviews and type up the information, one individual at a time (Cohen et al., 2007, 467). Each interview 'file' on the Ipad could be identified by a four-word name: 'PhD', 'name of school', 'pupil/teacher/parent' and 'personal name' (a pseudonym which had been allocated to all participants to protect their and their school identity). For example: PhD Academy pupil Hussain.

Transcribing the interviews was a lengthy and complex process. But it was not a tedious activity; it did not feel like a chore to complete. In my mind, people had given me their time and opinions; I owed it to them to listen to their every word and do something with it. I would listen to one sentence, stop the tape and type it. Occasionally, I would need to listen a second, maybe even a third, time to the same information in order to capture it accurately. I would then move on to the next sentence. However, in order to

arrive at the correct position in the interview, often it was necessary to rewind the tape which meant listening, again, to a few of the words of the previous sentence. Some of the interviews needed to be translated into English from the community languages in which the interviews were conducted. Consequently, by the end of the transcribing process, I felt as if I had listened to the interview three, maybe even four times over. Having met the interviewees, listened to their opinions in person and now, again and again, on the Dictaphone, felt as if their voice was well and truly embedded inside of my head. I now knew what the whole, the sum total of all the interviews, looked like; what had been said, by whom, in which school community.

Given that qualitative data are textual, non-numerical and unstructured, coding is said to be crucial in the analyses of such data to organise and make sense of them. According to Basit (2003) coding allows the researcher to communicate and connect with the data, to facilitate the comprehension of the emerging phenomena and to generate theory grounded in the data. She identifies a number of stages of this process which include noticing relevant phenomena and analysing the data in order to find commonalities, differences, patterns and structures.

Cohen and Manion (1994) advise that in the case of small surveys this can be achieved manually. This was what I did. I did not think it was necessary to use a computer programme. Having met the interviewees, listened to their opinions in person and now, again and again, on the Dictaphone, felt as if their voice was well and truly embedded inside of my head. I now knew what the whole, the sum total of all the interviews, looked like and what its overall and general message was. I also had some idea what had been said, by whom and in which school community. In order to make use of the data I read it through one more time.

Based on the focus of my research and the research questions I had generated from the literature review I was now able to identify 33 codes:

- Deen
- Dunya
- Educated
- Message
- Adab
- Ikhlaaq
- Respect
- Teacher understanding
- Benefits of teacher understanding
- CPD
- Madrassah attendance
- Routine
- Madrassah impact
- Links
- Accommodation

- Prayer
- Wudu
- Relationship
- Diversity
- Minority teachers
- Pakistani teachers
- Male teachers
- Female teachers
- Mosque at school
- Pakistaniness
- Tuition
- Quran
- Family
- Siblings
- Role models
- Extracurricular
- Cohesion
- Religion-culture

I then went back to the text and inserted the codes where I identified units of meaning as appropriate for that code. I had already organised each transcript by naming it as one of the three schools and as 'pupil', 'parent' or 'teacher'. In this way I was able to access and aggregate all relevant data in respect to each code and identify the interviewees concerned. This enabled me to get an overview of responses; for example, to conclude that students and their parents were equally split on whether it was important for schools to employ Pakistani teachers. It also allowed me to zoom in on particular instances and draw out extracts which could be used as quotations.

The analysis was a lengthy and complex process. This involved listening to the interview tapes; transcribing the interviews including translating parental interviews, which were in community languages, into English. I then read the transcripts a number of times; summarizing the transcripts and composing six matrices and choosing categories; coding statements; linking themes; selecting quotations; and ultimately, generating theory grounded in the data and writing it up in a coherent fashion.

Generally, it is recognised that it is difficult to quantify data from within a qualitative process (Cohen et al., 2007). However, following (Abeyasekera undated), the dichotomous nature of a few of the questions made this possible, for example, the numbers of students who, currently or in the past, attended a madrassah (Table 17).

The overall interview data file was marked for 'track changes'. Having recently published a book (Iqbal, 2013), the writing process for me did not seem an overly daunting task. Depending upon what the writer within me felt like writing, I would pick a theme and start drawing, 'cutting', out all of content, using the 'Find' facility in Word. 'Teacher

Understanding' was the first theme I decided to write. As I cut the relevant content out of the script, it would be shown up in red and with a line through it. This enabled me to see, at any given time, what content had already been made use of; my aim being that little of it should be left unused by the end of the writing process. I felt obligated to use the data which people had given me. This was the least I could do.

3.12 Conclusion

In this chapter I considered the issue of reliability and validity, including triangulation. I explored the matter of reflexivity and the contested subject of 'insider-outsider', drawing out the advantages and challenges associated with identity of the researcher. I concluded that a better description for me as a researcher would be a partial insider-outsider.

I considered the matter of research ethics and explained the meaning of cultural competence when conducting research, including the need to be careful when it came to religious sensibilities.

I explained my decision to utilise a mixed-methods approach in the study, involving a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. I then outlined the research context for this study and the sampling of the three schools, in order to capture sufficiently the diversity of the Pakistani community in Birmingham. I outlined how I set about to conduct the interviews, including of the parents; in their mother tongue where this was preferred.

Having generated a range of data from the three contrasting school contexts, I concluded the chapter by outlining the data analysis process and writing up the interviews. The chapter that follows will be an opportunity to discuss the findings from the research.

Chapter 4: EDUCATION; MEANING AND IMPORTANCE

4.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out to explore the extent to which education is considered to be important within the Pakistani community. The meaning of education is explained from the perspective of Pakistani parents. This emphasises both IRE and the education that is on offer within the British system. The multidimensional nature of education is explained, making a distinction between education and instruction. The impact of family responsibilities is presented, with particular implications for the education of Pakistani boys. This is contextualised within the literature and previous research.

The social class context is explored. Families of FSM children were less likely to think that school was important for their children's future. These pupils faced a number of disadvantages such as lacking a quiet place in which to do school work or having access to help when completing their homework. Here, a comparison is made between FSM and non-FSM pupils both within the Pakistani community and between Pakistanis and White pupils.

4.2 Pakistani commitment to education

Pakistani pupils were found to be positive about education (Table 13). The findings in this study showed that almost the same numbers of them as White pupils recognised that doing well at school was important for their future. This was illustrated in their response to statements such as: I work hard at school and I think doing well at school is very important for my future.

There was also little difference between the Pakistani and White children when it came to having a quiet place in which to do school work and their family's ability to pay for after-school activities and trips. A slightly smaller percentage of the Pakistani children reported having access to a computer at home. A majority of the students from both the main groups were able to access help with homework. However, there was a large gap between them and the White children; 16.9% fewer Pakistanis reported (when compared with White pupils) that there was someone in their family who they could turn to in such situations.

Table 13 Beliefs and actions towards education by Pakistani (n: 54) and White pupils (n: 82) (% agree/strongly agree)

Statement	Pakistani % (n)	White British % (n)
I work hard at school	94.4 (51)	93.9 (77)
I think doing well at school is very important for my future	96.3 (52)	97.5 (80)
I have a quiet place in which to do school work	83.3 (45)	82.9 (68)
I have access to a computer at home	90.7 (49)	98.8 (81)
My family can afford to pay for my after-school activities and trips	92.6 (50)	92.6 (76)
If I need help with my homework, there is someone in my family who I can turn to	68.5	85.4

4.2.1 Respect for education and teachers

According to the Islamic view of education, the teacher is the most important actor in the teaching and learning process (Kania et al., 2011). She does not merely function as a source of knowledge for the students but also a model for good conduct (Badawi, 1979), a quality that is especially important given the teacher's role in delivering tarbiya, growth and development dimension of education (Hussain, 2004; Anderson et al., 2011; Yasin & Jani, 2013) which is seen as important according to the Islamic idea of education. Consequently, teachers are generally respected by their Muslim pupils. In Berglund's (2012) research, teachers stood only behind parents and God in the eyes of Muslim pupils. 70% of those surveyed said they would confide in their parents, 58% in God and 50% in teachers. Only 5% of non-Muslim students claimed that they would confide in their teachers, placing them almost to the bottom of the list of possible responses. Arthur (2011) has drawn attention to the moral dimension of teaching and the moral role of the teacher. His research, involving 5207 young people and 21 teachers in 25 Midland schools, suggests that, apart from parents, teachers are often regarded as the people most likely to have an influence on students' moral character. The teachers in his research agreed that the most powerful influence they have on their students is role modelling by exemplifying the behaviours they wished to see in their students and in society at large.

From the responses given by the Pakistani boys during the interviews, it was clear that they did indeed have a high level of respect for education and for their teachers. They explained that this was what their parents had taught them. For some of them, the message was reinforced at the mosque:

The same level of respect; for teachers, for parents. That's the way I have been brought up. My parents have always told me that you've got to respect, whoever is older than you... At the mosque there is the same teaching. Academy pupil Ibrar.

...how you should treat your teachers, that's taught at the mosque. I've definitely tried to do that. Community pupil Mazar.

Pakistani parents explained their high regard for education, which they communicated to their children. They explained that they saw it as a vehicle for success for their children. The following comment reported by Academy pupil Javed provides an illustration of the 'immigrant paradigm', (see p76):

My dad always gives me his own example. He worked in my Granddad's shop, then as a taxi driver before he bought the post-office. He says to me: 'you should work hard when you are young and then it will be easy when you are old'. He works long hours running his post office. He says: 'if I worked hard when I was younger, I wouldn't be here now. I would have a good job, working 9-5'. That's why he says education is important.

It confirms the findings of Joly's (1986) research about the community in Birmingham where parents similarly saw education as a way of avoiding their children following their parents in menial jobs.

For Strand (2014), Pakistanis were more likely (than White British parents) to have paid for private tuition for their children and be involved in their education. He also reported that Asian parents were more likely to know where their children were when they were out, were less likely to quarrel with their child and less likely to be single parent households. In Birmingham Warren and Gillborn (2003) had found that minority ethnic parents invested a good deal of additional resources to support their children's learning.

Basit (2013a) pointed to the investment of Asian parents into the education of their children. She found that almost all young people had their own room; all had a desk, books, a computer with internet and so forth. This was complemented by an expectation of hard work on a regular basis:

“It was strikingly clear that education was viewed as capital that would transform the lives of the younger generation. This educational capital was believed to be the most significant asset a young person could acquire and the families provided a range of support mechanisms to enable the young people to realise this aspiration.” (p719).

The parents in my study expressed their commitment to education and explained the message they give to their children:

At home, we stress the importance of education. We advise they should go to school on time, not to cause trouble with a teacher or any of the children. Not to fight. Not to be bud-tameez, (disrespectful). Whoever a teacher is, you should respect them and follow their instruction.

Community parent Khalaq.

I always tell my children that you should respect your teacher. Whatever they say, follow it.

Grammar parent Shahida.

I have had no chance for education. I want a different future for our children. Community parent Junaid.

Community parent Zaman elevated the status of teachers to that of *roobani waldain*, (spiritual parents):

We say to our children to treat the teachers as if they were your parents. So whatever the teachers tell you, you should do that...basically be good at school.

Grammar parent Wali explained his family's tradition of valuing education:

My dad went out of his way for my education and that's what I feel I need to do for my kids as well.

The idea of respect was linked back to the parents' religion:

Our deen, religion, teaches respect; how you should treat your elders. It teaches about adab, manners. It's not just about namaaz, prayer. Our deen teaches akhlaaq. Academy parent Ashraf.

This was a confirmation of what had been acknowledged by the DCSF (2008) where it was noted that religion can “contribute significantly to the moral climate of a school, encouraging high standards of respect and behaviour which are upheld by the religious belief systems of pupils' families and community groups” (p16).

Academy parent Ashraf linked what they taught their children to their role as parents:

We teach the children about this (respect for teachers) at home too. In fact, our role at home is very important in that respect.

Community parent Tazeem described her son's behaviour and, in doing so described what to her was the 'good student':

My son is theek, thaak (all-right), he is a good pupil. Teachers are happy with him. He does not misbehave. He attends every lesson. He has respect for time, he is never late. He does his work; homework too. .

Between the 24 pupils and 16 parents, there were over one hundred references to 'respect' in the interviews; around a half to respect for teachers and education, with the rest for elders, parents and adults in general. Grammar Teacher Steve confirmed the commitment to education and high aspirations of Asian parents. He explained that the

parents saw education as a route to success and aspired for their son to go to university, for sought after courses:

... regardless of their background, a lot of the Asian parents are very keen for their child to succeed and they have high aspirations for their sons. They could be from the humblest background and still have that desire for their son.

4.3 Deen and dunya; meaning of education

Parents were asked what education meant for them. It was clear that they placed an emphasis on both the religious and ‘of this world’. Academy parent Ashraf’s response was typical. Speaking in his mother tongue, Urdu-Punjabi, he explained that education had to include both *deen* and *dunya*, explaining what it meant:

But for us it’s both deen and dunya. We think both are important. Majority of people from our community believe that deen is very important; alongside (the rest of the education). Both deen and dunya are important. Without deen (the child) won’t know where they have come from. We should have both deen and dunya. They have equal importance.

The evidence of this could be seen in his son, Academy pupil Imran, attending madrassah every day since primary school. He also spoke of what was expected of an educated person, that they should know about praying and how to treat people properly. He described it as ‘naik tareeqa’ (pious manner). Community parent Khalaq made the same point, explaining the reason why one should prepare for the after-life:

It is my view that children should have deeni and dunyaavi education; both are important. Deeni education helps a person prepare for the next life. For that we need the Quran, prayer, fasting; we have to know about Allah Taala. Our dunyaavi education is necessary for this world.

Grammar parent Hafza elaborated on this by explaining what success meant:

I tell the children: education is very important. Religion is very important. They have finished their Quran. They have to read their prayers.

Grammar parent Daalat similarly stressed the value of education, pointing out that without this one could not expect to get a good job easily. But, for him, education was not complete without including religion:

He needs to know what Islam is; it would make him a good human being. (Religion is) very, very important for us.

Community parent Zaman, when asked how important it was for his son to have religious/Islamic education, responded that their faith dictated that their son should learn the basic fundamentals of Islam, including reading the Quran and the prayers. Grammar parent Shahida explained that there was a duty on the parents to provide religious education. Her interview was in fluent English. Nevertheless, she used the Urdu word for duty to explain their role as parents:

As a parent, it's our farz, it's our duty, that your child knows the key parts of our religion, can read the Quran. Education, yes, it is important for life here. But we have to prepare for the life in the hereafter.

She then explained that religious education was not just 'other worldly'; it was important for this world too. Community parent Jamil similarly pointed out that it was not a matter of this world and the next but of leading a 'good' religious life in the face of the irreligious world. Like in Halstead's (1986) research, these Pakistanis had two aims for education: accessing the best of the education on offer in the British state education system and the preservation, maintenance and transmission of their Islamic beliefs and

values, both through direct teaching and (ideally) through a school ethos informed by these values. In other words, the parents desired for their children to receive the ‘dunyavi’, worldly, and ‘deeni’, IRE.

4.3.1 Adab and akhlaaq; what being ‘educated’ means

A number of the parents spoke of the meaning of education and outlined what being educated meant, confirming its multi-dimensional nature i.e. talim, tarbiya and tadib (Hussain, 2004; Anderson et al., 2011; Yasin & Jani, 2013). They spoke of the value of adab and akhlaaq, manners and morals. For Community parent Faiz adab was key for children. Grammar parent Wali spoke of adab being synonymous with ‘being educated’:

...his education to me is not just his academic performance, but, the overall personality that he develops. High grades are one aspect. You know, he needs to have good knowledge of things AND (original emphasis) overall development.

When asked to illustrate what this meant, he responded: “You know, for me if an elder comes in, you know, I would probably stand up”. Community parent Sakina pointed out that deeni education helped to make the children better human beings. Grammar parent Syed similarly pointed out: “It’s a vital part of his bringing up. Without religion, you’re not a complete human being.”

For Grammar parent Daalat, being educated meant looking after one’s parents, being good to the community, “your responsibility as a brother, to your relatives, as a neighbour, all things like that. As a good son, when the parents are old, you don’t leave them, you look after them”.

The parents saw their task as being role models for their children and setting a good example for them:

Our home atmosphere has influenced how he is. We have to set an example. Grammar parent Syed.

You show by example. You are a role model yourself. Grammar parent Daalat.

4.4 Family impact on education

The family for many years has had a significant place within the Pakistani context (Anwar, 1979; Shaw, 1988; Werbner, 1990). Its positive functions include being a resource for all its members and provision of role models for the young people (Basit, 1995; Crozier & Davies, 2006; Thapar & Sanghera 2010; Berglund, 2012; Basit, 2013a). However, it would appear from the findings that the family also has a negative impact in relation to education. In response to the statement: 'My family responsibilities interfere with my education', 31.4%, of the Pakistani pupils agreed, compared to 20.7% of the White pupils. The negative impact of the family was more of an issue for Pakistani boys; 37.8% of whom agreed with the statement, compared with only 17.6% Pakistani girls. This may be due to the patriarchal nature of the Pakistani family where more is expected of the boys, such as attending funerals.

A number of parents offered a comment on this subject. Grammar parent Shahida spoke of the general demands of the Pakistani culture on its members. She pointed out that one consequence of this was that few Pakistani parents were able to participate in social activities at school, with parents from other ethnic groups.

Some parents do prioritise their children's education and protect it from family activities. Community parent Junaid pointed out that, if there was a wedding or a funeral, they did not expect their children to become involved, unless it was a close relative. He also pointed out that in their wider family they arranged weddings in the

summer holidays so that it did not disrupt children's education. He also explained their family provided a quiet space for the children to do their homework. When asked how important education was for them, he said:

In our family we are very much (education) focused. If we are going somewhere over a weekend and they have exams to revise then that takes priority.

On the other hand, for Community parent Jamil, children's education was important but not any more important than weddings and funerals. He thought it was important for children to be present at such occasions, to pay their respect.

4.5 Homework

In chapter 2, it was pointed out that homework was beneficial to children's education. My findings have shown that for Pakistani pupils this presented a problem. It was in response to such situations facing disadvantaged children that the DFES (2006a) had encouraged schools and other organisations to provide study support. For the Pakistani children in my study, this school-based and teacher-supervised provision would be a clear solution.

4.6 Social class context

It is necessary to explore what if any associations there are between SES and the educational experiences of the Pakistani pupils in the sample. The questionnaire data provided a picture of socio-economic status, namely the students' FSM eligibility.

Between the three schools, 20.4% of Pakistani pupils fell into this category, compared to 18.3% of White British students. By far the largest group of Pakistani FSM were at

Community, 36.8% of the overall Pakistani pupils; at Academy they made up 17.3% while there were no FSM in the Pakistani cohort at Grammar.

It has been pointed out (chapter 2) that generally it is assumed that being poor has less of an impact on ethnic minorities when compared to White British. However, my study, in relation to a number of indicators (Table 14) arrives at a different conclusion.

Table 14 Comparison of Pakistani (n: 11) and White (n: 15) FSM pupils

Statement	Pak % Agree/ Strongly agree	White British % Agree/ Strongly agree
I think doing well at school is very important for my future	81.8	93.0
My family think that school is very important for my future	81.8	100.0
I have a quiet place in which to do school work	72.7	100.0
I have access to a computer at home	81.8	93.3
Someone from my family usually comes to parents' evening/reviews at school	81.8	100.0
If I need help with my homework, there is someone in my family who I can turn to	54.5	93.3

4.6.1 FSM comparison between Pakistani and White British

Being FSM appears to have a more negative impact on Pakistani pupils than their White counterparts as shown by the fact that fewer Pakistani FSM pupils (as well as their families) thought doing well at school was very important for their future. 27.3% fewer Pakistani pupils, than White, had a quiet place in which to do school work, 11.5% fewer had access to a computer at home and 18.2% fewer reported that someone from their family usually came to parents' evening/reviews at school.

There was a large gap (-8.8%) between Pakistani FSM and White FSM pupils who reported that if they needed help with their homework, there was someone in their family to whom they could turn. This points to social class as one possible cause of Pakistani educational underachievement. However, it is necessary to point out that the results are based on very small numbers of respondents (11 Pakistani and 15 White) and the sample is not randomly drawn, so it is necessary to be circumspect in the conclusions that can be drawn from the data. Also, although the factors I have measured are generally linked to under-achievement, there are others (such as family stability, parents knowing where children are) that usually have a positive impact and where Pakistani pupils on FSM might score higher. It is also important to point out that my findings do not agree with the results of other more representative samples (Strand, 2011).

4.6.2 FSM comparison within the Pakistani community

Table 15 Response of Pakistani pupils by FSM status

Statement	Not FSM % (N=43)	FSM % (N=11)
I think doing well at school is very important for my future	100.0	81.8
My family think that school is very important for my future	97.7	81.8
I have a quiet place in which to do school work	86.0	72.7
I have access to a computer at home	93.1	81.8
Someone from my family usually comes to parents' evening/reviews at school	93.1	81.8
If I need help with my homework, there is someone in my family who I can turn to	72.0	54.5

In order to assess the difference associated with FSM, Pakistani FSM pupils were compared with those who were not FSM. The results (Table 15) showed that being FSM had an adverse impact on the pupils in a number of areas. For example, FSM pupils (minus 18.2%) and their family (minus 15.9%) were less likely to think that school was important for the children's future; the children were less likely to have a quiet place in which to do school work (minus 13.3%); less likely to have access to a computer (minus 11.3%) less likely to have someone from their family attending parents' evening/reviews at school (minus 11.3%); and, if they needed help with their

homework, they were less likely to have someone in their family to turn to (minus 17.5%).

Drawing on the research conducted, this chapter has provided key data which will act as a foundation for the thesis. It has confirmed previous research (Blanden & Gregg, 2004) that poverty does make a difference. There were slightly more poorer Pakistani students, when compared with White British (20.4% as opposed to 18.3%). Of particular significance was having a quiet place in which to do school work, something that more than a quarter of Pakistani FSM pupils lacked. Even worse was the situation of being able to turn to someone for help with homework; nearly a half of the Pakistani FSM students lacked such a resource. Here it is worth considering what such help looks like. Walker et al. (2004) explain that when parents involve themselves in their children's homework they interact with the child's school, establish physical and psychological structures such as specifying regular times and articulate and enforce expectations, provide general oversight of the homework and engage in homework processes and activities. Clearly when a Pakistani child is deprived of such help they miss out on its benefits and have a need for alternative provision.

4.6.3 Parents' financial investment in education

All the parents interviewed were found to make considerable investment into their children's education, confirming previous research (Warren & Gillborn, 2003; Strand, 2014). Many of the parents in my study paid for extra tuition for their sons, such as coaching for the 11+ tests. In addition, the parents, of course, paid for all of the supplementary religious teaching of their children.

The interview with Private tutor Yaqoob³³ helped to shed light on the investment by the parents in their children's education. He provided evidence from his perspective as a provider of such tuition. He explained that the Pakistani parents took education very seriously including those who were eligible for FSM. "They want their kids to do well. They are not just 'leave it up to the school', they want their children to have extra help. They really pay attention to their kids; they want them to do well."

4.6.4 Grammar parents' education strategies

We learnt from Lareau's research (2003) that parental strategies differed according to their socio-economic status. This was found to be true amongst the Pakistani community. As pointed out above, that, while some other parents did invest in their children's education by providing extra tuition for their children, this was definitely so for the Grammar parents. According to Grammar teacher Masood, "all pupils have tuition to get here, whatever their background". All 7 of the Pakistani boys interviewed reported having received such tuition. Much of the tuition was in core subjects such as English, maths and science. Some students had the tuition provided at home while others attended classes away from home. The parents interviewed verified the provision of such tuition:

We arranged for our son to have private tuition. He went to a private tutor which gave him that extra something. Grammar parent Daalat.

We had a teacher come to the house to provide maths tuition. If we think he needs more help then we'll get the teacher back. Community parent Zaman.

Of particular significance here was the investment by Grammar parents into their boys' IRE. Three of the five parents I interviewed reported that their children did not attend

³³ Private Tutor Yaqoob ran a tuition centre, after school and at weekends. I was told the children came for extra support in their core subjects.

madrassah but had the benefit of the parents paying for a teacher to come to their house. This meant the children did not need to spend unnecessary time travelling to a madrassah and were able to benefit from more focussed one-to-one tuition.

The other two parents reported that they had collectively organised supplementary religious education for their children:

A few families get together and a couple of people deliver some sort of discussion about, you know, Islamic knowledge and life and all that. Not regularly. Self organised, a kind of study circle. Grammar parent Wali.

We hire a school building and provide Urdu, Arabic and Islamic Studies, up to GCSE level. Grammar parent Syed.

4.7 Conclusion

This chapter explored the extent to which education was considered to be important within the Pakistani community. It was shown that Pakistani pupils' attitudes towards education compared favourably with their White British peers. The boys were found to speak of their respect for education and teachers. Pakistani parents were also reported to express high regard for education which they saw as a vehicle for success for their children. Unsurprisingly, the parents were found to make a significant investment in their children's education, such as in additional tuition.

The parents explained the meaning of education which emphasised both religion and the education on offer within the British system. The parents saw education as multidimensional. As well as knowledge, it included wider development as a human being. Education was also distinguished from mere instruction. The impact of family

responsibilities was presented, with particular implications for the education of Pakistani boys. This was contextualised within the literature and previous research.

The social class context was explored. FSM children faced a number of disadvantages such as lacking a quiet place in which to do school work or having access to help when completing their homework. A comparison was made between Pakistani and White FSM pupils. Following a look at the general area of education, the next chapter will be an exploration of IRE as it affects the students' lives.

Chapter 5: RELIGION; MEANING, MANIFESTATION AND ACCOMMODATION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out to explore religion in the context of the education of British Pakistani boys. I shall explore its manifestation in the lives of the boys being studied.

I shall explore the benefits of attending madrassah classes and how the provision could be improved. I shall discuss the opportunity-cost of participating in such activity, such as missing out on the benefits of extra-curricular activities. Here, I will show how important such activities are, both educationally and socially.

I shall investigate whether there are any links between schools and madrassahs and the extent to which this aspect of the students' lives is understood by the school teachers. I will show how religion was being accommodated by the schools in my research through the provision of time and space for prayer within the school day.

5.2 Importance of religion for Pakistani students

Students were asked to state the importance of religion for them, using the survey question: 'My religion is very important in my life'. The responses (Table 16) indicated that Pakistani pupils had the highest level of agreement, 88.8%, in this matter. This confirms earlier research (Abbas, 2002; Sahin, 2005; DFES, 2006; Shah et al., 2010). Religion was also important for other Asian pupils; 87% Bangladeshi and 85.7% Indian pupils agreed with the statement. However, religion had relatively little importance for White British young people, with only 28% agreeing with the statement. This finding is supported by Village et al. (2011).

Table 16 My religion is very important in my life (%)

Ethnic group	N	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
White-British	82	45.2	26.8	13.4	14.6
Pakistani	54	1.9	9.2	18.5	70.3
Indian	28	7.1	7.1	50.0	35.7
Bangladeshi	23	8.7	4.3	8.7	78.3

5.2.1 Religion and culture

It could be said that all humans have culture but only some have religion. For those in the latter category, such as the Pakistanis in this study, the distinction between the two is likely to be a non issue; they are likely to conclude that religion is cultural and culture is religious. While the separation of religion and culture in societies is often attempted but it is not easily achieved. The contested nature of the subject matter can be seen from Beaman (2012-13). She referred to the decision by the European Court of Human Rights which decided that the crucifix, which is central to the Christian religion, was a cultural symbol, especially in countries such as Italy which had given rise to the case. Beaman also demonstrated “the complex ways in which religion and culture are intertwined” (p73). She explored whether displaying of a crucifix in public buildings and saying prayers before political meetings were acts of religion or culture. In her keynote lecture at the Sociology of Religion conference 2016, Beaman also offered a third case; exploring whether yoga was a cultural or religious activity in the context of Californian schools. My findings confirmed Abbas’ (2003) research, amongst the same Pakistani

community in Birmingham, that religion and culture not only go together, at times each concept is used as a synonym for the other, as shown by these responses:

Our culture has got lots of religion in it. Some things are religious, some things are cultural and some are both. You can't always separate them. Grammar parent Shahida.

There is an inextricable link between religion and culture. You can't separate religion from Pakistani culture. The two are connected. Religion is a part of the culture. Academy teacher Mehboob.

Therefore, throughout what follows, religion and culture are treated as one, 'joined-up' concept.

5.3 Manifestation of religion – madrassah classes

Table 17 Madrassah participation by Pakistani students; data from interviews

	Academy (n)	Community (n)	Grammar (n)
Yes currently attend	2	4	1
Used to do so in the past	5	6	6
Total N for school	7	10	7

To assess what 'being religious' meant, students were asked whether they had participated in regular activities at a place of worship. 62.9% of Pakistani pupils had done so. For the majority, 67.6%, the focus of the activities was religious education; for 14.7% the focus was community language learning. The few White students (28%) who attended a church did so in order to participate in sport and leisure activities.

Madrassah attendance was explored during interviews with the students. They were asked whether they participated in religious activities after school or over the weekend. As shown in Table 17, about a third of the students were currently participating in such activities while the rest had done so earlier in their life. I was able to verify this information through interviews with the parents. Many of the pupils had been participating in such learning since primary school.

Private tutor Yaqoob outlined the requirements for religious education, given his extensive knowledge of the subject matter. He confirmed that it was *farz*, obligatory, for the children to learn to read the Quran and *salaat*, prayer. He explained that it normally took 3-4 years for a child to *finish* their Quran, i.e. read it in Arabic from start to finish: “Memorising it off by heart takes a long time. But it depends on the child.”

The amount of time the Pakistani students spent in madrassah activities varied between one and four hours, from three days a week to daily. During this time they were expected to learn to read the Quran i.e. in Arabic, at least once. Some students went to a mosque or other location for such learning. A number of the parents hired the services of a religious teacher who would come to the house for a set amount of time.

I explored with the students their madrassah routine. The response from Academy pupil Imran was typical:

3.15: School finishes

3.30: Get home. Eat something, get changed, do wudu, ablution. Start reading the Quran at home, for about 30-40 minutes.

4.30: Walk to the mosque; sometimes get a lift.

6.00: Return home

5.3.1 Benefits of attending madrassah classes

We have seen from the survey responses that for the majority of Pakistani students the focus of the after-school classes was religious education. Much of this time appeared to have been spent on learning to read the Quran and the basics of Islam such as how to pray. Some students spoke of other learning too, such as *adab* and *akhlaaq*, (manners and morals); how they should behave towards teachers, other elders and the wider community.

Community pupil Mazar explained that the teaching at his madrassah, which was focussed on manners and morals, had made a positive difference to his behaviour as a pupil. He said that, as a result of what he had been taught, he is better behaved at school. Academy pupil Javed agreed:

I used to argue a lot with teachers. Now I don't. It's linked to the attendance at the mosque; they teach you to respect the teachers and not argue with them.

5.3.2 Students missing out on extra-curricular activities

Although, this was not something I had intended to explore, during the interviews, a number of the teachers pointed out that by attending madrassah classes Pakistani students were missing out on extra-curricular activities at the school. They explained the benefits of such activities and their likely implications for those who do not participate in them. A few of the student interviewees also shed light on the subject. Academy teacher Zahida pointed out that this had negative implications for their relationships with their fellow pupils and for community cohesion:

I have after school classes and they say: 'well, I have to go to the mosque, miss'. So really, they're missing out on that social cohesion and that interaction and widening their circles which

is really imperative in a multicultural society. Because they're then almost cocooned within, missing out on all the other things that perhaps would widen their horizons as well. They're missing out on valuable extra-curricular, social, emotional development.

She pointed out that students should mix with everyone else and expand their understanding and their friendship groups. They could also tap into the wealth of the arts, drama and music through extracurricular activities. She explained how this would impact on the students' later life:

If I'm looking at someone's CV and I think they're a well rounded individual, participated in group activities, I would certainly think there is more to that person. A lot of them its, its school and then straight to the mosque.

Academy teacher Jean was also concerned how the Pakistani boys were missing out:

The other thing they don't realise is the importance of out of school activities. And that is something we have to get across...

She explained that lack of participation in extra-curricular activities would have implications for the pupils when they wish to obtain a place in the sixth form, where it's a competitive process requiring a broad CV. According to her, pupils who have not participated in extra-curricular activities could be seen as too narrow in focus and too limited in outlook.

Community teacher Linda pointed out the other consequences of after-school participation in mosque activities:

If they've been at school all day and then they go to the mosque, they have very little time to do their homework. And also, they have very little down time. It impacts on their behaviour when they are at school.

Grammar pupil Hamzah accepted the importance of extra-curricular activities and saw the importance of having a broader CV “because it enabled you to become more interesting as a person as well as appearing so to employers”. He said his participation in such activities made a positive difference to his relationships with the other boys.

Grammar pupil Bilal pointed out the benefits of ‘meaningful contact’ (Ramalingham, 2013): “by spending time together, informally, you see a different side of people. That helps you to get to know them.”

5.4 Improving madrassah provision

The madrassah provision has been said to have certain weaknesses which require attention. Amongst them is the general burden on the child and a financial demand on the parents (Halstead, 2005), many of whom are on low income. As the children are not able to participate in extra-curricular activities they lose out on general benefits (Feldman & Matjasko, 2005; Wikeley et al., 2007), academic benefits (Marsh & Kleitman, 2002; Massoni, 2011), confidence-building, (Wikeley et al., 2007), relationship-building (DCSF, 2007a) and cohesion (CIC, 2007), through ‘meaningful contact’ between pupils of different ethnic groups (2013). In the light of this, it is necessary to explore alternative ways for the students to receive their IRE.

A few of the boys and parent interviewees were critical of madrassahs. While still being a part of the provision, they said madrassahs placed a great deal of time pressure on the

children and possibly impacted on their school work. Academy parent Nawaz said, after the child had been to school all day, to then go to the madrassah for two to three hours was a big demand on the child:

I think that's a bit too much for a child. The child probably falls behind because he doesn't have time to his other study. Because too much time is taken in the evening by the mosque.

Academy parent Najeeb pointed out that the mosque system for children was “quite flimsy”. There were many problems with it. “(Those who run the teaching in the mosque) want to earn some money.” He also spoke of the time burden placed on the children:

After having been at the madrassah for two hours, he has to do his homework. He has no time to watch TV. I have noticed how hard such a situation can be on the child.

Academy pupil Wasim, also pointed out that going to the madrassah meant “there was not enough time to do home work, projects, that kind of stuff.”

Confirming Cherti and Bradley (2011), Academy parents Afsar-Zeinab referred to the problem of madrassah teachers being brought in from Pakistan who were not familiar with the language and educational context of the children which can be a barrier to effective communication. They suggested that schools and the Pakistani community could work together, to recruit suitable teachers for such provision “just as they have chaplains in the prison service. We could do something similar at school.” They also felt this would help to ‘join-up’ the two worlds for the children- of the school and the mosque/madrassah.

5.5 Links between school and madrassahs

I explored whether there were any links between the two areas of Pakistani boys' education – school and madrassah. Students were asked to respond to the statement: 'There are good links between my school and mosque/temple/church'. Overall, less than one third, 31.4%, of the Pakistani pupils agreed. However, majority of the links were between Community and its local madrassahs, where 54.6% Pakistani boys had agreed with the statement, with a much lower level of agreement in the other schools – 26.8% for Academy and 23.8% for Grammar.

A number of respondents pointed out the potential benefits of links between the school and the madrassah. Academy pupil Khalad said such links would be a good idea through which the two systems of education could "collaborate, and combine their knowledge about the student." Discipline was likely to be one area of possible benefit, through a joined-up response from the school and the madrassah. Academy pupil Javed spoke of a fellow Pakistani student who disrespected the teachers. His school teacher spoke to the local imam who had a word with the boy and his behaviour improved. Therefore, he thought it a good idea for there to be such links:

If the school had links with the madrassah, they could ring them up and say this student's done this and they are not happy with it. Then the madrassah can deal with it as well as the school.

Academy teacher Mehboob also supported such links, pointing out the more general benefits:

There may be issues that the school is facing with the boys. They could be addressed by the Imam. It could be: the children smoking; it could be there's ethnic tension amongst pupils; many things. It would help us to sing from the same hymn sheet.

He also thought some of the teaching at the school would benefit from being reinforced at the mosque, on issues such as sexuality. The students may not be sure where Islam stands on such matters so if the teaching came from the imam, they may pay more attention to it. Academy teacher Zahida also felt the links would be a good idea. It would give the school teachers an insight into the world of the madrassah; they would learn about the type of education the boys were receiving there. She suggested a way forward could be for the school to set up a working party:

And the Pakistani presence in the school is growing, yeah, its growing³⁴. So, I think that's really important; to have credible working party or committee or someone who carries out some action research in that area.

Of the three schools, Community was clearly an exception in this respect. Boys and teacher interviewees spoke of good links between the school and local mosques, due to the effort of their Headteacher:

Yes, the Headteacher knows the mosque leaders very well. He visits the mosque regularly. He has a good bond with the Imams. Community pupil Amir.

The matter was followed up with Richards, the Headteacher, who confirmed the links:

I have good links with the mosques. I know the imams well. We tackle issues together. There was a drug issue in the community, with certain boys. Imam phoned me up at home. "Mr Richards, can you help me out. Yeah, can you help me out." I said, yes, we'll work together. We got together, we shared information. He tackled it from his end, I tackled it from mine.

³⁴ As at 18.07.2013, the Pakistani pupils in Academy made up 29.3%. Through my on-going wider work with the school I have learnt that, as at May 2016, this figure had gone up to 40.7%.

Richards pointed out that he had established meaningful and on-going relationships with imams from a number of the mosques in the school's vicinity. He explained that these religious leaders (as well as other faiths in the area) know that his door is always open to them. he went on to explain that on one occasion he had even been invited, as a neutral and trusted outsider, to help resolve some conflict between two of the mosques. He had been to a number of the mosques, to visit and *speak at* (his emphasis):

There is the Khomeni mosque, then there's one down near the sports ground, Bengali mosques, Pakistani mosques, predominantly all Sunni based, with some exceptions. I've got links now with the one on Acacia Road³⁵, that's just been built. So lots of links in there, constant dialogue and conversation with, you know the key thing is to keep the communication links open.

He explained that he went to the mosques about once every half term; after the Friday prayer, the busiest day for the mosques:

They invite me in. I go in front of the congregation. There can be over a thousand men there. I'm able to do a short talk. Often, I have said I am a man of faith. I know you have faith. I am here to serve your community, serve the children. If you need to talk, you should come and see me. I say a little bit about the school, what we're doing.

He explained that on a few occasions, the imams have come into school, to discuss issues that face their congregations and which they think he as a Headteacher might be able to help with:

They come in my office and talk to me, about whatever they want to. I talk about my faith, they talk about theirs. We walk around the school, so they can see what's happening in our

³⁵ Not the real name

curriculum. You know the children see me walk around with the imams in the classrooms.

There's a transparency about what we're doing.

5.6 Alternative options to providing deeni education

Table 18 I have to spend too much time in religious classes which interferes with my school work

Ethnic group	N	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
White-British	17	58.8	29.4	5.9	5.9
Indian	12	41.7	58.3	0	0
Pakistani	26	46.2	30.8	15.4	7.7
Bangladeshi	14	42.9	57.1	0	0

Education continues to be highly valued by Pakistani young people. Their families invest both time and money to ensure that their children are able to receive the maximum benefit from it. Religion also continues to be of high importance to Pakistani young people, confirming previous research (Halstead, 1986; Nelson, 2006). As the state system only provides *dunyavi*, worldly, education, this leaves a gap, in the eyes of the Muslim parents, for *deeni*, religious, education. This they set out to fill through madrassah classes. The students were asked for their response to the statement: 'I have to spend too much time in religious classes which interferes with my school work'. Of those Pakistani students who responded to the question (n=26), nearly a quarter agreed. While this was only a small number of students, they were the largest group to respond

in this way (Table 18). It was also in line with Mogra (2011) who pointed out that Muslim children were often found not to enjoy their madrassahs, compared to their schools. However, this finding was in contrast with Strand (2007a) who had reported the pupils to be positive about supplementary school, though it was not clear whether his research included any madrassahs.

While boys from all three schools equally participated in madrassah activities, Grammar pupils spent their time more effectively in this respect. This was the only school where parents (higher SES and more educated) had grouped together to set up their own 'after-school' religious classes, held on a Sunday so that they did not interfere with school. This may provide a model for the rest of the community. It also offers an example of the difference social class and parental education makes.

5.6.1 Madrassah at school?

The education system continually strives to improve the curriculum within the school system. However, the madrassah provision appears to have escaped such efforts. Given the importance attached to religion by Pakistani parents, it is to be expected that they will continue to want their children to participate in such supplementary education. This calls for improving the education provided, which may contribute to raising educational standards for Pakistani boys. Could one option be to bring madrassah provision within the school system? This was explored with the students through the questionnaire (Table 19).

Given the Pakistani students' response, above - that they had to spend too much time in religious classes which interfered with their school work - it was not a surprise that a

significant number – nearly two-thirds of those who responded to the statement - agreed that IRE which they learnt in the madrassah classes should be taught at the school.

The Pakistani parents interviewed were keenly supportive of the idea; of bringing IRE into the wider education system. Their responses indicated that this was an innovative way to approach the matter; something that had not been explored before. Academy parent Nawaz thought it a good idea for IRE to have the same level of quality as the rest of the school curriculum:

Yes and you are right. And it's one of the good ideas. I will be the first to agree, to say that this is a good thing that Mr Karamat has suggested.

He was treating my open-ended question as an idea. This has been referred to as an 'arousal effect', (Brown & Tandon, 1978) where the researcher's questions affect the subject's perceptions of, and feelings about, the topics of discussion and questions posed by the researcher lead respondents to think afresh about issues and possibilities, in this case, for providing IRE. Academy parent Najeeb was definite in his support for the idea:

We desperately need to attend to this matter. Making religious provision at the school would be best. It would save a lot of hassle and time. The children can then study other things. They may even have spare time, to do things they want to, such as watch TV.

He said the current system of providing IRE was “not solid; quite flimsy”, with the quality being low. "There can be as many as 60 children per teacher. The facilities and the general learning environment can be poor too." Community parent Junaid thought it was a “fantastic” idea, using the school buildings for such provision:

That would be very good, forward thinking and also very responsive; something that will get a good response from the local community, from the local parents.

Community parent Zaman pointed out that if IRE was provided by the school then it would free up his son and enable him to participate in extra-curricular activities.

As to how IRE could be offered ‘within’ the education system, parents explained that such provision could be made available “after normal school finished or over the weekend”. Community parent Khalaq, like others, was keen for his son’s school to provide IRE and suggested how it could be provided:

“They could do it in the morning. If they were to start their day with Quran, then they would have barkat, they would be blessed, for the rest of the day. It would bless the child and the school. We know if a person starts their day with prayer in the house, they have rehmat, blessing, all day. The other (non Muslim) children could benefit too; they might become interested in our religion. The teachers will also be blessed.

For Grammar parent Shahida, the school providing such religious education would help to create consistency and regularity. Community parent Zaman was similarly keen, on grounds of safeguarding; an area which was said by Cherti & Bradley (2011) to require attention. He thought it would be a good idea for madrassah teachers to be CRB-checked; even better if the religious teaching was provided at the school. For him, the current system of unregulated IRE had the potential of children being taught the wrong (extremist) ideas:

But we could have something after school. So religious teaching could be done at the school.

They could hire a Muslim teacher. That way, you would know your kids are learning in a safe

environment. In this day and age, it's very easy to manipulate a child, like put hatreds towards certain races. So it would be better if the religious teaching was in the school environment.

Academy Teacher Jean also spoke about the possible anti-Christian influence of some madrassahs. "One group did not want to write about Jesus because they said that was what they had been taught at the madrassah." Her Pakistani colleague, Academy Teacher Zahida, supported this with her own example:

There was an instance where a student had been told ..listening to music was against Islam. It troubled me. So, I spoke to the imam at the mosque. He was quite rigid and actually his views were quite retrograde, in a Wahabi-like Islam, saying, no, no, you can't have that. It's corrupting; its western influence. Well, it's not really, when you think of Sufism and everything like that; that is inherent within Islam as well. But, they saw that as western corruption. So, there, there was the misconception but that's what they were feeding the students.

Cherti and Bradley (2011) had also drawn attention to the poor quality of the madrassah system and the curriculum provided. Academy teacher Mehboob agreed that improvements could be made, with better teaching and modern resources, students could be taught much more in the time they spent at the mosque.

I asked whether the schools providing IRE would raise any questions of authenticity. A number of the parents suggested that as long as qualified and competent teachers were employed to deliver IRE then this would have the confidence of the Muslim parents.

Community parent Junaid said:

. .. as long as it is an imam who understands and he is a good quality teacher then I don't think there's an issue. A mosque is there to pray; to learn Arabic or to learn the Quran doesn't have to be in a mosque. I personally was taught in a house.

A few of the parents suggested that some of the teaching usually provided through the madrassahs could be integrated into the schools' curriculum. For them, Urdu and Arabic should be provided, alongside other non-English languages. Some also mentioned that Islamic Studies should be provided as a GCSE subject. I shall return to this in the final chapter.

Table 19 What I learnt in my religious classes should be taught at school

Ethnic group	N	% Strongly disagree	% Disagree	% Agree	% Strongly agree
White-British	17	29.4	29.4	23.5	17.7
Indian	11	18.2	45.5	36.4	0
Pakistani	25	0	36.0	32.0	32.0
Bangladeshi	14	28.6	21.4	42.9	7.1

5.7 Religious accommodation by schools

In the context of the increasing Muslim presence in society, the accommodation of their religion has become a key challenge for multicultural Europe (Hewer, 2001; Fetzer & Soper, 2003; Meer and Modood, 2007; Modood, 2013). This is clearly the case for education, especially in places such as Birmingham where Muslims have been the largest religious group for a number of years. The significance of the issue is even greater in the light of my research which has shown that, of all the main ethnic groups, their religion was the most important for Pakistanis. Here, the concept 'transformative

accommodation' appears to be relevant (Shachar, 2004). It relates to statutory authorities and minority communities (such as Pakistani Muslims) working together, to resolve their different values and expectations. With reference to education, the concept relies on a US ruling at the request of the Amish community. The Supreme Court had approved an accommodation measure to allow Amish children to be withdrawn from state school at the age of fourteen (after they had received eight years of state education), so that they could be educated for two more years according to the wishes of the Old Amish Order community.

All three schools in my study were found to be 'accommodating' – providing 'religious space' (Ameli et al., 2005) - the needs of Pakistani Muslim students. A good illustration of religious 'accommodation' was provided by Community pupil Pervez. He had recently joined the school, having previously attended an Islamic boarding school. When asked to compare Community with his Islamic school, he responded that there was little difference between the two. In a number of ways he had found Community to be a better school:

There are more facilities at this school; that's the main difference. I think this school is quite better than that; the education it provides. The teaching is quite better and the facilities.

Later, I spoke to his mother, Community parent Sakina. She confirmed that "he has made a good transition. He is now settled."

I explored the matter of prayer at the schools, from a student perspective. I asked them whether they were able to pray at the school. Were facilities provided for them to fulfil the requirements of *wudu*?

Students at all three schools spoke about the facility they had for congregational prayers. This was at lunch-times, especially on Fridays. None of the schools had 'proper' wudu facilities, though Community came close to it. Community Headteacher Richards detailed the practice of prayer at his school and how it had developed:

When I took over my post, in 2008, there was, maybe 20 students on a Friday. Now we have up to 300-400 students. Normally we use the hall. We've got a photograph of virtually half the school (500-600) praying on the Astroturf.

The other two schools appeared to be 'reactively accommodating' of Muslim pupils' whereas at Community faith was positively valued, as Headteacher Richards pointed out: "(For us), faith is valued at the school, it is seen to be linked to education; that reflection is a good thing. So, therefore, it's been encouraged." He said that he had, on occasions, talked to the boys, after they'd been praying and found them quite receptive to his message:

So, it's a useful way of addressing students as well and respecting their culture and standing there and talking to them after they've been praying...They've been quiet, haven't they and focused. So, they tend to be quite receptive. I talk to them just a few minutes. The boys have been kneeling, they're sitting there, they've been praying. They're attentive looking. Quiet, interested in what you've got to say. There is a heightened, a heightened spiritual awareness.

Gent (2011) has pointed out the impact of religious activity on Muslim children, in his case the devotional act of becoming a *hafiz*, memorising the Quran. He had categorised the benefits as religious, social, educational and personal. He spoke of one boy who had pointed out how it had made him feel clean inside and gave him a sense of peace. Gent also quoted a child saying that prayer was energy-generating.

Grammar Teacher Steve pointed out that, at their school, they have a room set aside for the Muslim pupils to pray; it was in the part of school where they would not be disturbed. According to him, it was well used, especially on a Friday. As to ablution, the students used the toilets. This was also confirmed by his colleague, Grammar Teacher Masood:

When you say 'facilities' there are toilets where they can go and do wudu. There are not facilities like you have in a mosque, for example. They have toilets where they can do wudu. It's acceptable (he stresses the word). It's acceptable.

It would appear that at both Academy and Grammar, the accommodation of Muslim pupils' prayer needs is at a most basic level. Neither provided proper wudu facilities which was a problem for Grammar pupil Hashmi: "We should have proper wudu facilities. It's not good that we have to do it in the sink."

Academy teacher Mehboob - an advocate and a mediator (Howard, 2010) for the Muslim children in the school, in matters such as prayer - pointed out that some of the boys did not participate in prayers due to there being no ablution facilities:

If the school provided wudu facilities, I reckon you'd get 500 kids lined up. A lot of the boys complain that they don't pray because they can't make wudu. Because, they say, the toilets are too dirty. So, that seems to be a barrier for them. Without proper wudu facilities, you get water everywhere.

Academy had the opportunity to change the facilities. However, instead of improvements, it made the situation worse. During work carried out as a part of its Building Schools for the Future programme, it installed unisex toilets, whereas previously there were separate toilets for boys and girls. "I can't see pupils making wudu

in there; cos they're very exposed.” In Mehboob’s opinion, facilitating prayer would lead to improvement in the pupils’ behaviour:

And, I think prayer could be used to encourage students to seek knowledge, improve their manners and respect the community. I think prayer can be used as a mechanism to get kids a little bit focussed.

5.8 Conclusion

In the above chapter I explored religion in the context of the education of British Pakistani boys. I showed that the main manifestation of their religion involved the boys spending many hours at madrassahs. As well as pointing to the likely benefits of madrassah attendance, I discussed its likely opportunity cost. Given the problems with Islamic pedagogy, I pointed to possible improvements that could be made in the madrassah provision.

Given that madrassahs were found to have a significance presence in the lives of Pakistani students, I investigated whether there were any links between them and schools. My findings confirmed previous research that the boys experienced school and madrassah as two separate worlds.

I then explored whether such discontinuities could be reduced, for example, by providing at the school some of what the boys learnt at the madrassah. I showed how religion was being accommodated by the schools. All three schools were found to accommodate prayer needs of the boys.

Given the importance of religion for the boys, in the next chapter, I shall explore the level of teacher understanding of this aspect of their lives and the steps schools have taken to facilitate such understanding.

Chapter 6: TEACHERS; DIVERSITY AND UNDERSTANDING OF PAKISTANI PUPILS' HERITAGE

6.1 Introduction

This chapter explores teacher diversity. Data are presented which explored, with the boys and their parents whether it was important for them to have Pakistani and Muslim teachers. The importance of having male teachers was also explored.

The chapter also focuses on the subject of teachers' understanding of Pakistani pupils' heritage, asking whether this would make a difference to the children's education such as better student engagement and greater congruence between their home and school lives. It is explored how teachers currently acquire their understanding, what the schools had done in this respect and what more could be done such as through a greater role for Pakistani teachers. I conclude by asking whether a 'funds of knowledge' approach could be taken to facilitate for teachers to acquire understanding of their Pakistani pupils' heritage.

6.2 Teacher diversity

For many years, diversity in the teaching workforce and employment of teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds has been seen as a good thing by educationalists and policymakers. A number of justifications have been cited for this. For the schools, it would be a way to represent the diversity of society (Carrington & Skelton, 2003), provide a source of cultural expertise (Swann, 1985; Cline et al., 2002; Basit & Santoro, 2012), cultural brokers (Irvine, 1989) and promote equity and social justice (Carrington et al., 2008). Furthermore, it has been pointed out that for minority background

students, teachers from their own ethnic background would provide role models (Stewart et al., 1989; Quirocho & Rios, 2000), a better ‘connection’ between their school and home lives (Warikoo, 2004), a way to reduce the ‘stereotype threat’ (Steele & Aronson, 1995) and lead to learning gains (Dee, 2005; Egalite et al., 2015), especially amongst low SES students (Dee, 2003, 2004). Reed (2009) spoke of the benefit of employing teachers from the local community, as opposed to ‘commuter’ teachers - who come into school, to do a job and then leave, to go back to their own communities of residence. According to the government children from both minority and majority ethnicities would benefit from diverse teaching workforce (Ghouri, 1997; DES, 2003). Here, I set out to seek the views of Pakistani students and their parents.

6.2.1 Teachers of the same ethnicity and religion

In the survey the students were asked whether it was important for them to have teachers of their ethnic and religious heritage. Just over one third, 35.2%, of Pakistani students agreed that it was important to have teachers of their ethnicity while slightly more, 42.6%, agreed that it was important to have teachers from their own religion.

Interviews with pupils, parents and teachers were used to shed greater light on the importance of teacher diversity, especially those of Pakistani heritage. Data were drawn from the interview transcript by using the code ‘Pakistani teachers’. There was a mixture of views across the three school communities. While some thought it a good idea to have Pakistani teachers and/or a diverse school workforce, others said it made no difference who the teachers were. In response to the question, ‘Is it important for him to have Pakistani teachers?’ about a half of the pupils and parents, across the three school communities thought it was a good idea to have Pakistani teachers and/or a diverse school workforce and a similar number said it made no difference whether there

were any Pakistani teachers in the school. Respondents gave a number of reasons for having Pakistani teachers:

- It would help to generate a better rapport between teachers and their Pakistani pupils:

You relate to them a bit more. Because, you know, they're from the same background as you. You do feel more at ease with them. But in terms of teaching, what matters is they are good at their job and help you learn. Grammar pupil Habib.

- It would be a way to link home-school lives of the pupils:

Teachers from your own background have a better understanding of the issues you might be facing. They will know what it's like, what you are going through. To have a teacher from your own background, you can talk more about the cultural things; about weddings, stuff like that. We might also have a joke; speak in our mother tongue. Its helps to build relationship too. Academy pupil Ibrar.

- It would help for the teaching workforce to reflect the pupil population:

It's nice to see a Pakistani teaching. It shows they are not outsiders. There should be different races of teachers. There's a lot of Pakistanis in England so that should reflect (in) the amount of teachers you see. The amount of teachers you see should reflect the amount of students. Academy pupil Waheed.

Academy teacher Mehboob supported the idea of a diverse teaching workforce, including in leadership roles. In his view, this would make a difference; seeing people of their own ethnicity in senior roles would help to raise the boys' aspirations. For Academy teacher Zahida, this would provide role models and bring diversity of perspectives:

Pakistani teachers; yes, absolutely. I think it's important because of that connection isn't it? I think we need those role models. I think having, if you have a richness of staff, you're enriching everyone else.

Academy teacher Jean also thought it a good idea to have diversity in the staff:

I think it would be good to see one or two of them on the senior leadership role, which there isn't.

Grammar Teacher Masood was the only Pakistani teacher the school employed; on a part-time contract. He emphasised the role-model potential of Pakistani teachers:

Just by me being here, they can see that a Pakistani can be successful, can be a teacher.

Whereas before me there were only English, White teachers. I am the first Pakistani teacher in this school.

He explained the Pakistani boys responded differently to him, compared with other teachers:

Yes they do. They come and shake my hand and say 'Slaam-alaikum, how are you?' I say 'fine'. They might make small talk; they might ask me, 'what time is juma (Friday prayer) or whatever'. You know it, having me as a Pakistani teacher just eases their way into the school.

Community parent Junaid pointed out that it was good to have a diverse teaching team that reflected the demographics of the school: “You know, in a school such as this, if it had all White teachers then there might be an issue.” For him, what mattered even more was that they had a “good understanding about Islam, that Muslim culture is different”. For him it was important for teachers to understand where the pupil is coming from: “You know, they can't just treat everyone the same.”

The following comments were made by pupils and parents in whose view a teacher ethnic background was not important; what mattered was their understanding of the children's needs and their heritage and the quality of their teaching:

I'd say, no it's not important. As long as they're doing their job properly, teaching the kids properly, that's the important thing. I don't think they've got an Asian teacher at the school.

Grammar parent Shahida

I don't think its important (original emphasis). Any teacher, as long as it's a good teacher and he understands the child's needs, you know a teacher's a teacher. As long as they have a good teaching ability and at the same time have a good understanding, of Islam.

Community parent Junaid

Not really. As long as they understand; where you are coming from.

Academy pupil Majid

No. I'd rather have.. If it was a case of a Pakistani teacher and another teacher who wasn't Pakistani but was better, I'd rather have the better teacher.

Grammar pupil Danyal

What matters is the way they teach. It doesn't matter what race or colour they are.

Community pupil Tahir

There were isolated comments from parents where they expressed opposition to having teachers from their own community. This was due to their worries about confidentiality, as shown in this quote from Academy Parent Najeeb:

...next time there is a wedding, funeral or some other community gathering, the teacher may talk about their child with others in the community. Whereas parents may freely discuss things with an English teacher because their two paths are unlikely to cross.

6.2.2 Gender make-up of the teaching workforce

In the survey the students were asked whether it was important for them to have teachers of the same sex. Very few of them, 16.6%, felt this to be important.

This was explored further through interviews with the pupils and their parents. A large majority of them, 89.5%, said it made no difference, while the remainder stated, teachers of the same sex would be a good idea but it was not essential; what mattered to them was “good quality” teachers.

6.2.2.1 Pakistani boys and female teachers

From time to time one hears education practitioners and others point out that Pakistani boys have a problem with female teachers. This common-sense based perspective may have been what led Academy teacher Jean to, without any invitation, comment on the subject:

I sometimes feel that the boys, some of them, are quite disrespectful to women. And I would put that down to their cultural background.

I was able to seek views of other teachers on the subject. Her colleague, Academy teacher Mehboob, thought this was too simplistic. He thought Pakistani boys were no different from other boys; in that they would:

“... try their luck with any teacher. I don’t think this is something that’s pushed in the culture, definitely not in the religion... So, I think some people do jump to the conclusion that sometimes boys, Pakistani boys, may, you know, disrespect female teachers a little bit.

His female Pakistani colleague, Academy teacher Zahida, also expressed a similar view:

Quite a few times I've heard some teachers say: 'oh well, you know Pakistani boys don't like women, especially women in authority and they don't respond well to women because it's a cultural thing'. I've heard it quite a few times at this school and other schools as well.

I asked whether she herself had experienced any such behaviour, given that she was a woman:

I have never experienced anything of that sort to say that they're not taking me serious because of my gender.

In my interview with Community teacher Linda. I did not ask about female teachers and Pakistani boys' attitudes towards them. I simply posed the standard question: 'Is it a good idea to have male teachers?' to which she responded:

There is a perception that Asian boys respond better to men. I am head of Y11. I am White, female, below average height, and I've had no problems.

She elaborated on the subject:

I think it comes from people's perceptions. And I think it's their behaviour; if they assume there is going to be an issue, then there is (original emphasis) an issue. But, I think it's a myth. I've heard it, people say it in the school but I absolutely disagree.

She was asked whether during her time she had ever had any issues with Pakistani boys:

I've never had an issue. I've never, never experienced any sort of discrimination from the boys. I've never felt that they've treated me like anything other than a person in-charge of a classroom, as a teacher. I've never felt like my gender or ethnicity has had any effect at all.

Her colleague, Community teacher Abid, offered a similar view:

I think, it rather depends on the teacher. There may be some issue occasionally but it's a minority of them (the boys). We make it clear to them right at the beginning when they start school, what we expect from them. But there is this perception out there that Pakistani boys struggle with female teachers but I don't think that is true. I've not seen any evidence of that here.

For him the solution lay in the schools providing good teachers who could deliver good lessons, to keep all the pupils engaged, regardless of whether they were male or female. He also felt it was important for schools to make clear to the pupils their (the school's) equal opportunities expectations.

Academy teacher Mehboob suggested that schools could seek the support of the imams, who would be well placed to remind the boys of the religious position.

6.3 Pakistani boys' role models

It has been recognised that young people need support and encouragement from adults in the community beyond the school (Phillip & Hendry, 2000; Bricheno & Thornton, 2007). More widely, the DFEE (2000a) spoke of 'community learning champions' who "would be from within the community rather than being 'parachuted in' and have an enabling and co-ordinating role – talking to parents and the wider community and encouraging them into the school" (p40). However, Maylor (2009) pointed out that young people do not always relate to people of their own ethnicity.

I asked the students whether they considered it important to have role models from their own ethnic group. Around a half, 49.9%, of Pakistani pupils agreed that this was important. This was broadly similar to the response from White pupils, 51.1%.

During the interviews, the boys informed me that they had role models from within the family (Crozier & Davies, 2006; Thapar & Sanghera 2010; Berglund, 2012; Basit, 2013).

I look up to my mum. I respect her for what she's done. Community pupil Razaq.

My dad. He worked his way up; he was from a village in Pakistan. I admire how hard he has worked to get to where he is. Grammar pupil Habib.

One of my uncles. He is a doctor. He's done really well. He went out to India and Pakistan to help people. So him, he would be my role model. Grammar pupil Bilal.

My brother, he has just graduated with law. He would be my role model. He told me it's better to go to university... Community pupil Mazar.

My cousins who've done degrees, like doctors, technicians. You look at them, you see yourself doing that. Community pupil Tahir.

I also look up to my sister. She was always into her books. Academy pupil Ibrar.

6.3.1 Role of religion

Religious involvement is said to make it easier for young people to access role models who act as the pathways to their success (Brown & Gary, 1991; Byfield, 2008). Also, that religious organisations provide an amiable and cross-generational environment which was conducive to the development of meaningful and influential adolescent-adult relationships. Such relationships are known to provide an increased sense of moral order. Erickson and Phillips (2012) pointed out that as parental relationships and influence waned for young people, they needed others whose example could be followed. This was where adults in religious organisations were able to step in. “When adolescents participate in organized religion, they gain access to older attendants who

may offer care, attention, counsel, or otherwise positive encouragement. The relationships youth form with these religious adults offer opportunities for role modelling and interpersonal ties that can have important implications for educational attainment” (p570). For them ties with religious-based mentorships are important for educational attainment because they represent a connection to a formal organisation that has similar constraints to the education system.

A number of the boys were found to draw support from their religious beliefs (Brown & Gary, 1991; Byfield 2008; Berglund 2012; Erickson & Phillips 2012), mentioning specifically the Prophet Mohammed (Davies, 2016), as their role model:

Religious leaders; like our Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) like how he lived his life in terms of like, he encouraged knowledge. He said: you should travel the world just to seek knowledge. Because of that, I would probably choose him as one of my role models. It makes me work harder. It definitely does. Community pupil Mazar.

I studied the prophets' lives, especially Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him). I study it every Sunday. So I try to emulate that as a part of my religious experience. Grammar pupil Aakif.

A few mentioned their teachers, both at school and the mosque, as the people they looked up to:

I want to have a beard and have respect; like my ustaadji, my mosque teacher. He prays five times a day and everything. (He) gives respect and gets respect, that kind of thing; I want to be like that. Community pupil Faisal.

My school teachers and those at the mosque. The way they support people, the way they live their life. Community pupil Pervez.

The school teachers I look up to. The mosque teachers; they tell you how they've changed, what they've been through themselves. Community pupil Israr.

I asked the teachers whether there were people in their community or history that the Pakistani students would emulate. Academy teacher Zahida responded that most of the students would lack knowledge of such people, as it was not something taught in the school.

I'd be surprised if most of them knew when Pakistan became independent. They wouldn't know about Muhammed Ali Jinnah. I doubt it if they'll know about Allama Iqbal, I doubt it. They'll probably know very little about Pakistani history.

She pointed out that the real problem was that her teacher colleagues had little or no knowledge of such key figures from the Pakistani community and history.

Consequently, Pakistani boys would not be provided such knowledge, unless they had middle class, educated parents (“but if you're coming, your family are from a rural background, farming people, they won't have that kind of education”). During the interviews with the parents, I came across one parent mentioning that in their family they made sure the children had some understanding of key people from the Pakistani community and history.

6.4 Teachers' understanding of Pakistani pupils' heritage

We know from literature that positive relationships between children and teachers can create the conditions for better learning (Delpit, 1995; Leadbeater, 2008), higher levels of achievement (Haertel, 1981; Murrell, 2000; Warikoo, 2004) and social/emotional competence (Murray-Harvey, 2010). Conversely, poor relationships can lead to pupil disengagement and underachievement (Callanan et al., 2009). Critical to such

relationships is the understanding teachers have of their pupils' heritage and their current lived realities, described as 'funds of knowledge' (Moll et al., 1992).

More than two-thirds, 68.4%, of Pakistani students agreed that it was important for teachers to understand the pupils' religion. During the interviews a majority of the students spoke of the benefits of teachers having such understanding. They indicated that it was central to the teaching and learning process where it was important to have good teacher-pupil relationships; it enabled the teachers to be more responsive to the needs of the students. Academy pupil Waheed pointed out that it was important for teachers to understand the different needs of the students they were teaching. For Community pupil Faisal such understanding would lead the students to "get on" with the teachers and lead to greater confidence to ask them questions during lessons:

If they don't understand me then I can't get on with (them). I can't ask them anything, I can't talk to them, like, they won't understand me, like if I ask them for something, homework or something, they wouldn't be able to help.

For Community pupil Saleem there were general benefits of such understanding by teachers; such as greater student engagement (Leadbeater 2008) - being made to feel welcome, coping with difficult situations and the teachers bridging the home and school worlds of the pupils - as well as benefits in particular teaching situations:

In science, we are supposed to examine a liver. They didn't want to bring a, a pig's liver because it would affect, like our Islamic background. So they brought us a sheep's liver instead.

Community pupil Razaq explained that where teachers had such understanding, it would help them to avoid causing offence and respect the pupils (Swann, 1985).

Community pupil Israr explained that teacher-pupil relationships extended to informal conversation:

When you meet teachers in the playground, you can talk to them; it could be more than work as well. You can talk to them about, about things you've got in common, like football.

For Academy pupil Majid, understanding by teachers, of pupil heritage, would enable them to avoid having superficial relationships: “If the teachers understand your background they can have a laugh, make jokes even.” Academy pupil Ibrar explained that he liked having a good relationship with his teacher so that he “I can talk to them about the events that may have happened on the weekend.” Moll et al.’s (1992) reference to ‘thin’ and ‘single stranded’ teacher-pupil relationships is relevant here as is Bhatti’s reference to ‘normal things’.

Academy pupil Majid pointed out that where pupils knew the teachers understood them at a deeper level, they felt more comfortable around them. “If you are having problems at home, you could probably talk to the teachers. Otherwise you might keep the problem to yourself.” For Community pupil Amir, teacher understanding of pupils’ background was central to the pupils’ sense of belonging to the school and feeling welcome: “you feel invited.” Academy pupil Khalad pointed out that such understanding enabled the teachers to connect the school and home worlds of their pupils; they would be in a position to “ask good questions about things outside school”, thus lessening the discontinuities between the two worlds which for Ogbu (1982) was a particular problem for students from disadvantaged backgrounds, such as Pakistanis.

The parents also saw the value in teachers understanding their Pakistani pupils’ cultural and religious background. Grammar parent Shahida explained that teachers needed to

be familiar with intricacies of the Pakistani culture as this would help them understand their pupils' day-to-day behaviour.

Grammar parent Wali pointed that without the necessary understanding the teachers would not be able to bridge the values of the school with those of the home and create congruence for the students (Merry, 2005). This would mean the children would not have to leave their home culture at the school gate (Bullock, 1975), a problem faced by minority (Markose, 2008) and Muslim children (Coles, 2004).

Community parent Zaman explained the value of schools employing teachers from the local community which would help to link the pupils' school and home worlds:

Some teachers are from the local area so they have an even deeper understanding, of the realities of the local community. They walk up and down the same streets and shop in the same shops... so that means they understand the area. These teachers have an advantage over the others. Someone from outside the area wouldn't know what they know.

6.4.1 Teacher perspectives on understanding Pakistani pupils

Data gathered through my interviews with the teachers outlined the reasons for and benefits of such understanding, the responsibility of the school and its likely impact on pupil outcomes. By far the most comprehensive response came from Community teacher Abid. He outlined the following benefits of such understanding:

- Helps with teaching:

If you can relate a topic to maybe their background or something they have understanding of, it helps you with your communication generally as well.

- Helps to link school and home lives of students:

We find that our school values are linked in what they might learn at the mosque and from their family. It's linking all they know; it can make a difference.

- Helps to knock down teacher- pupil barriers:

Sometimes they might find it a little bit difficult to engage with a teacher who they are not comfortable with. It can take a teacher a few weeks to overcome the barrier. Maybe it's a lot easier for me; I am the same background as them. Having the (cultural) understanding can help the teacher to communicate better. Once they're used to a teacher, they'll open up and be more relaxed around the teacher. It could also be when walking around the corridor, out in the playground, just having a general conversation; the kids want to ask you something; being able to relate to them, it just helps with that relationship building with the kids.

- Helps in pupil engagement:

If you have an understanding of the pupils' background, it helps with engagement in the lessons. If you can relate your teaching to their home lives - Islamic heritage, country of origin - it can make a difference. You might say 'so how does the lunar calendar link with the orbit'.

Grammar teacher Steve stressed the importance of teacher-pupil relationships which for him were critical in the teaching and learning process as well as for general interaction between teachers and pupils. For him, good relationships made it easier for the teacher to deliver a good lesson. He also thought that 'small talk' between teachers and pupils was an important way of building such relationships. However, this was not something that would be possible if the teachers did not have an understanding of their pupils' day-to-day lives. Furthermore, he pointed out that teachers needed to understand their pupils' cultural heritage so to avoid causing offence by 'putting your foot in it'. He went on to reiterate Community parent Shahida's comment above:

It's very important. Say a pupil says: "I can't do my homework because my great uncle passed away". Now in the English culture this may not be important; it's such a distant relative but for the Pakistani pupil it's a close relative. We know all the family have to go so the homework may not be done.

Academy teacher Jean explained that understanding by teachers made a “huge difference” for pupils; they may feel more supported and may, consequently, respond in a different, better, way. She shared the example of an Y11, who was under pressure by his mother to go to a grammar school but he was not convinced by this:

When he realised I understood his situation he beamed at me; it made that relationship that bit different.

Academy teacher Zahida also thought that understanding the pupils' background was critical for teachers, given its likely impact on their learning. For her, understanding, what has been referred to as ‘funds of knowledge’ (Moll et al., 1992), was central to the whole educational process:

And, if I want to reach the children I'm teaching, it's important for me to know where they're coming from. And, they come to me, they're diverse, they're rich in different ways; it's important for me to know, to have knowledge of that.

She pointed out that it was the teachers' responsibility to enable the students to reach their potential; something they were unlikely to be able to do if they did not understand the pupils:

If I really don't know enough about their culture and background, am I really going to be able to motivate them, inspire them, really engage them? Ideally, I want to be able to go into the

classroom and say: 'actually, I know what you're about and I'm going to use that to our advantage; for you to achieve, get you to your full potential'.

For Academy teacher Jean, such understanding made a difference to the pupils. In some roles it was even more critical. She explained that for teachers in the behavioural or pastoral team, the cultural knowledge might influence how they address some of the issues, such as how to accommodate Muslim students' needs while they were fasting. For her, it was the school's responsibility to provide such training.

6.4.2 The current level of teacher understanding

During the interview, Academy teacher Jean spoke of 'Ramadam', instead of Ramadan, when referring to the month of fasting. (I double checked, without letting her know the reason for doing so. She repeated the mistake.) It is possible that this was an indication of her poor level of understanding of her Muslim students' religion. Of course, there may have been other reasons for the mispronunciation, especially as she had previously been a teacher of Religious Education who would have a high level understanding of such matters.

The Pakistani teacher interviewees outlined the current level of understanding amongst their peers, of the heritage of the Pakistani pupils. They confirmed that the level of the understanding was poor, thus confirming Bloom (2011), who had said that teachers had a 'tabloid' understanding of Islam. Academy teacher Mehboob, in response to whether his colleagues had an understanding of Pakistani boys' cultural background, replied: "The honest answer is: no, they don't. Absolutely not". He explained that school and home, for Pakistani pupils, were two separate worlds, causing them to lead a double life.

So in answer to your question: do members of staff truly (his word) understand (gives added emphasis) Pakistani boys and their culture, I don't think they do. Some do but most don't.

This was backed up by his colleagues. Academy teachers Zahida and Jean, who pointed out that their school did not offer any opportunities for the staff to acquire such understanding:

I've been here 13 years. We've never as staff had anyone explain the minority culture; no. (It's) what you pick up. I mean because I teach RE, I know all the religious backgrounds.

Academy teacher Jean.

Academy teacher Mehboob explained that the 'commuter teachers' (Reed, 2009), who lived away from their multicultural schools, were less likely to understand their Pakistani pupils, while those who were from the local community were likely to have greater understanding:

Teachers may live outside Birmingham so really they've not had to mix with people of the ethnic minority. Local teachers have a good idea what kids do when they go home, what their typical day is like. I think the majority of teachers don't really understand the lives the average Pakistani boy lives, what he does when he gets home.

He spoke of the demographic changes which were taking place in Birmingham generally and at Academy, leading to the 'cultural environment', at Academy, to increasingly have more of a Pakistani 'feel'. However, he believed that such changes were only noticed by teachers with the necessary understanding of the pupils' cultural background:

You will see a lot of Pakistani boys who are more confident in their Pakistani-ness. You will see them using 'ethnic' words. They may just talk amongst themselves, they'll shake hands; very cultural things. They'll all take the day off for Eid (festival). They may even use swear words in their own language. Those subtle nuances, I think, I can pick out very quickly when I

see boys communicating. I can see how the Pakistani side is coming out. To the untrained eye, maybe this won't be obvious.

6.4.2.1 How the teachers acquired their cultural understanding about Pakistani pupils

With Lander (2013) as backdrop – that trainee teachers were not being prepared with understanding of ethnic diversity – I explored how the teachers were acquiring such knowledge. Community teacher Abid explained that teachers who were from outside the ‘super-diverse’ (Vertovec, 2007) Birmingham often had little or no understanding of the cultural background of the students. However, once at the school they may pick up some understanding, from students and their fellow teachers.

Academy teacher Jean also stated that where one lived played a part in this respect:

For some staff who've come from elsewhere and some who don't live here (and a lot don't), such understanding can be a problem.

For Community teacher Linda, the source of her cultural understanding was her personal background, of growing up in Rockhill, a mainly Kashmiri/Pakistani area. She explained that she had had a very positive experience of coming from that community. She had made Pakistani and other Asian friends and had participated in cultural activities with them such as attending weddings. She also pointed to learning from her peers and from the general multicultural school environment.

6.4.2.2 The schools' contribution to enable teachers to gain cultural understanding

I explored the role of the school, following Blair's advice (2002) - that schools should provide CPD for teachers on diversity. Furthermore, following Lander (2013) I was able

to gather anecdotal evidence, utilising my contacts within the HE sector. This (Race, email 2015) confirmed that little was being done on ITT courses to prepare trainees on diversity. With this backdrop, my teacher interviewees made a number of suggestions as to what schools should do. Community teacher Abid suggested that teachers, especially when they first arrived at the school, could be asked to learn about the Pakistani pupils and their wider community. Academy teacher Zahida pointed out that there was a great deal the school could do to raise the teachers' awareness of the cultural background of the Pakistani pupils, such as by inviting local diversity experts to deliver training in the school. I asked, in the time she'd been at the school (8 years), what had the school done to raise awareness of the staff:

...cultural awareness does not appear on the CPD agenda. No. No. There's nothing.

The teachers identified a number of areas where they needed to understand their Pakistani pupils. For Academy teacher Mehboob, this would include matters such as the pupils' participation in madrassah classes. Or it may be to understand what the boys did in their spare time, given that many came from poor families: "As teachers, I think the more information you have, the better it is.." Grammar teacher Steve identified a number of areas which in his view were important for teachers to understand, in relation to their Pakistani pupils:

What does it mean when they have to fast, especially in those hot summer months? A pupil maybe away because of some religious or cultural requirement. I should know about that. I may be asking a pupil to do cross-country running and they maybe fasting. What does it mean for our Muslim pupils when we celebrate Christmas, a Christian festival? Do we do enough for their festivals?

Picower (2009) identified a number of issues for White teachers working in diverse schools. She implored them to explore Whiteness and its relationship to teaching, pointing to the dangers of such teachers maintaining advantage she referred to as 'White supremacy'³⁶. In order to become successful with students from minority backgrounds, she saw it as imperative that White teachers developed cultural competence and socio-political consciousness; with critical awareness of the role of culture, power and oppression. She suggested to ITT providers to "make a commitment to transform themselves in order to interrupt the hegemonic understandings of pre-service teachers by implementing strategies, programs, and reforms with this objective" (p211). Picower also argued for more teachers from minority backgrounds to be recruited into the profession.

6.4.2.3 Situation and the role of Pakistani teachers

Kohli and Pizarro (2016) have drawn attention to the particular role of minority teachers. They spoke of such teachers as 'advocate' for their communities, a resource for their non-minority colleagues and a bridge between the minority community and the school. Basit and Santoro (2012) spoke of minority teachers as 'cultural experts' who can translate for their ethnic majority colleagues. Community teacher Abid explained:

Staff will ask me questions, in relation to cultural or religious practices. This sort of thing helps them to have some idea that the young people have demands on their time such as going to the mosque. Yeah. I'm more than happy to help. Sometimes it's easier to learn from a colleague.

Academy teacher Mehboob explained that their background was a particular source of understanding for him and his Pakistani colleagues:

³⁶ Explained by Gillborn (2005). He saw education policy as "an act of White supremacy" (p498).

I have a good handle on Pakistani culture. I have a strong connection with Pakistan. I speak Urdu, quite fluently³⁷ and Punjabi; I speak both languages.

Community teacher Abid also spoke of being a resource for his non-Pakistani peers:

I've had staff come to me and ask: 'what does this mean? You tend to share what you know.

However, as in Kohli and Pizzaro's research (2016), there was little or no use made of the cultural expertise of the Pakistani teachers in my study. Academy teacher Zahida pointed out that she had not been used as a cultural resource. I asked how she would respond if the school did ask her to use her cultural knowledge for the benefit of her colleagues:

Well, I would be quite, quite excited..I would be happy to do that. I think it's an important thing that, at the moment, has, perhaps been overlooked.

Kohli and Pizzaro (2016) advised schools to ensure that minority teachers have a place on school leadership teams and to seek advice from them on school policy matters. Such advice would be equally relevant to my study. They suggested to schools to invest in minority teachers. They also drew attention to the marginalisation and alienation of minority teachers especially those who have few peers at their school from their own ethnic background. This was the case of Grammar teacher Masood. He was employed in a part-time role and was the only Pakistani teacher at Grammar. I asked him: 'In the time you've been here, how have you found being the only Pakistani, Muslim teacher?' He asked: "Officially or unofficially? I explained that all data gathered were confidential and would be anonymised. He then responded: "Ok. It's predominantly a White school. The staff are White." (He then went a bit quiet, almost a whisper). "I came here and it was difficult." I prodded further; to which he responded:

³⁷ He then spoke in Urdu, to demonstrate his competence.

There are still some prejudices there which I can see but they cannot see. I can see some of them. Like racism for example. You can spot it. You can realise 'oh right'. I can. But for someone who is not brown or different colour or black whatever, they can't spot it. For them it's not there, it's nothing.

I asked: how does it express itself?:

Ignorance. I am seen as a lesser being; they look down on me. Because on things I can talk about, things I know, they'll not talk to me. I'm a cricket coach. They won't ask me they'll go to someone else. It's a lack of respect. I have to go out of my way to show them I'm a good teacher whereas with the others they don't have to. Others cut corners, they might be late for lessons and they're still..Ok. I see them standing there 'chaa pee ray' (drinking tea), without a worry in the world.

Throughout my career I also had often found myself as one of the few Pakistani or ethnic minority teachers and feeling that I had to perform to higher standards of expectations. Consequently, I would work hard on, say, making presentations while my White colleagues would be much more relaxed; they would just scribble something on 'the back of an envelope'. So conscious I was of being one of a few Black and Asian advisers that I felt the burden of responsibility on my shoulders.

I asked: 'Is there anything else you'd like to say? He explained the double standards practised in the school, using an Urdu phrase:

Woh, siyahee jo meray nama-e-ehmal mein thee un-ki zulf mein lehra-ee to husan kehlai –
(That blot on me, when it was in her attire, it was called beautiful.)

6.4.3 Impact on pupils' performance

As to the impact on pupils, for Academy teacher Mehboob, teachers with such cultural understanding would be able to get even more out of the Pakistani pupils and make a bigger impact on their educational achievement:

By getting on the right side of the kids, you can change their attitudes and then change your results, maybe by 5%. It's do-able. Just, by, you know, having that little handle on the culture and knowing what makes these kids tick. What would make the pupils focus more on their work? What would improve their behaviour? The more information you have like this, the better. I think if you have a cultural understanding; what's happening in the house; the way they think; what they value; how they value things; I think you can do it.

For him, having the cultural understanding and knowing how to connect with the pupils was a useful tool in a teacher's armoury, to get the pupils to study when they were in the classroom.

Pupil interviewees also saw a clear link between teacher understanding (of pupils' heritage) and pupils' performance in the learning process. Community pupil Khadam pointed out that it was easier to talk to teachers who were known to understand the pupils. "Otherwise, you wouldn't want to talk to them. You just go to their lesson and then move on to another. You don't feel as comfortable with them. You just go to their lesson and that's it." Grammar pupil Hamzah pointed out that where a teacher was known to understand them, the pupils were more likely to pay attention:

"You'll feel at ease with them. Next time you have a problem or have a need you'll feel more... comfortable..to go to them.

Community pupil Pervez stated that the closer a pupil feels to the teacher “the more likely you are to learn from them” while Academy pupil Khalad pointed out that “you put more effort into what they are teaching you and stuff like that”. Academy pupil Imran explained that there were times when a pupil’s life outside of school needed to be considered such as when setting them homework. He explained it in relation to him going on jamaat, preaching and discipleship trips, over a weekend. This meant he was not able to complete his homework which had been set on the Friday and which was due to be handed in on the following Monday. The teacher could not understand why he had not done the homework; they had no appreciation of jamaat:

If the teachers understood about jamaat, they would give more time for assignments. It feels easier in lessons with a teacher who has such understanding.

These comments suggest that pupils are more satisfied with their schooling and happier if they felt more understood by the teachers. Although, it cannot be stated with any certainty, it is plausible that it might lead to greater pupil engagement with schooling and even more parental support for education and improvements in academic performance of Pakistani boys.

6.5 Conclusion

The chapter explored the importance for schools to employ Muslim and Pakistani teachers, to reflect their pupil diversity. In response, there were a mixture of views expressed by the interviewees. The importance of having male teachers was also explored with the Pakistani boys and their parents. Neither group thought this a necessity. Interview data from teachers, including females, showed that the stereotype belief that Pakistani boys do not respect female teachers had no basis.

In investigating teachers' understanding of Pakistani pupils' heritage, more than two-thirds of the Pakistani pupils thought it was important for them that their teachers had a good understanding of the pupils' religion. The teachers explained such understanding to be necessary, too. While pointing out that the current level of their understanding was low, the teachers explained that this was not seen as a priority, for the schools' CPD agenda.

Chapter 7: A CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE EDUCATION FOR PAKISTANI STUDENTS

7.1 Introduction

In this final chapter, I am faced with the question: so what now? In other words, what needs to be the policy response to education of Pakistani boys? I shall attempt to answer this question and to explore ideas around what may help to provide a more responsive education for Pakistani boys in England and raise their educational attainment.

In this chapter I revisit the research questions and key findings from my study. I discuss what a responsive education system would look like for Pakistani children and how such an education could be strategically provided within the current educational landscape, away from the previous local authority-based framework. I suggest the development of a strategy, aimed at different education stakeholders (government, schools and parents), for raising the attainment of Pakistani boys.

I explore how the madrassah system of education could be improved, such as through changes to its curriculum, it's possible incorporation within the state system and possibly reducing madrassah attendance by offering some of the teaching within the school curriculum. I explore whether an 'extended schools' model of education could be utilised in order to respond to Pakistani students' needs, including the facility to enable them to complete more homework and participate in extra-curricular activities.

I explore ways of improving teacher responsiveness, including an increased presence and contribution of Pakistani and Muslim teachers. Ways are suggested to improve teacher understanding of Pakistani Muslim heritage. Lastly, I consider the limitations of my research.

7.2 The focus of the research

I began this study with the aim of finding ways of reducing the number of Pakistani pupils, especially boys, leaving compulsory schooling without the benchmark qualifications. I posed my research question: what factors underlie variation in educational achievement among Pakistani boys in Birmingham? Might any of these factors contribute to an achievement gap relative to White British students? In order to answer this main question, I investigated the impact of SES on the boys' educational outcomes and processes. I explored whether religion was important for the boys and, as its manifestation, I asked whether the boys attended madrassah and, if so, how did that impact on their educational outcomes and processes. Here, I attempted to understand what Pakistani parents want from education for their children. The study attempted to arrive at an understanding of the impact of school and teacher factors on Pakistani boys' education. I explored with the boys and their parents the important qualities in a teacher (e.g. ethnic match, cultural understanding etc). I also investigated how schools accommodate the cultural heritage of Pakistani boys (e.g. religion observance etc).

The most significant finding from the study is multi-faceted. Confirming previous research it has been shown that education is highly valued by the Pakistani students and their parents and both place a great deal of importance on their religion, Islam. Education, for the parents, means both 'deen and dunya', religious and 'of the world'. The parents demonstrated, through the way they guided their boys' lives, their belief

that compulsory schooling left significant gaps in the boys' education. This led the boys to be sent to, parallel with their compulsory schooling, madrassah classes where they spent a significant amount of their out-of-school time, instead of using that time to participate in extracurricular activities provided by their school. This points to a possible challenge for the education system and the Pakistani parents and the wider community; to help raise the boys' attainment by enabling them to *increase* their school related work such as participation in extracurricular activities and 'intervention' or 'catch-up' opportunities provided for students who are seen by teachers to need additional input. The activities provided can have other wider benefits too. It is here that the students are able to spend informal time with a range of fellow students, including those from different ethnic groups and develop 'meaningful contact' (Ramalingham, 2013), thus generating greater community cohesion.

Another impact of religion was possibly in the area of boys' learning habits and style. This was a likely result of the very different pedagogical style employed at madrassahs, when compared with what the boys experienced in their state schooling – passive and uncritical learning; little or no focus on understanding of what the boys were reading and teacher-centred learning.

Homework was an area of need flagged up by this research. A small percentage of Pakistani students reported not having a quiet place in which to do their homework. However, nearly a third of them reported that they did not have people in their family they could turn to for help when completing their homework. This problem was faced by pupils across the board, though more so by those who were from low SES families. This appeared to be the main area where being low SES had an impact on Pakistani pupils. This can be seen when Pakistani FSM are compared with Pakistani non-FSM

(Table 14). When Pakistani FSM were compared with White FSM (Table 13) the former had a bigger problem. The other situation where we could see the impact of SES was in relation to parental strategies utilised in IRE. Grammar parents used their economic power to employ personal Quranic tutors who came to the pupils' home. This was not something done by the parents at the other two schools. Compared to the parents at the other two schools, Grammar parents were also better organised in their provision of madrassah education for their boys. They had done so by organising classes at the weekend so it did not impact of the boys' schooling or participation in extracurricular activities. A few Pakistani students reported that they had to spend too much time in their madrassah classes which interfered with their school work. While I did not specifically investigate this, based on earlier research, it is quite likely that their homework also suffered as a result of the boys' involvement in madrassah classes; after having been to madrassah they did not have the time or energy to complete their homework. As homework does not have to be 'home work' (Cosden, et al. 2001) ie done at home but could be completed 'at places other than home' (DFEE, 1998), the extended day spoken of by, the then, Education Secretary, Michael Gove (DFE, 2014) may be the answer. In Gove's view this would be particularly helpful for those children who come from homes where it is difficult to secure the peace and quiet necessary for study and where parents are not able to help them in the tasks set. Pakistani pupils in my study were found to face 'weighted scales' of homework (Sallee & Rigier, 2008). While this was particularly an issue for those of them who came from poorer homes, others also flagged this up as a need.

A majority of Pakistani students and many of their parents considered it important for teachers to have an understanding of the Pakistani heritage. However, this was found not to be a priority for ITT or CPD within the schools researched. Consequently, this

possibly left the teachers lacking a full understanding of their students' heritage. While the schools were found to accommodate some religious needs of their Pakistani students such as providing prayer facilities, teachers' poor understanding of the pupils' heritage meant they were not able to effectively bridge the students' lives at school and beyond. A related finding was the make-up of the teaching workforce. For a sizeable number, though not a majority, of Pakistani students it was important to have teachers from their own ethnic and religious background. Much of the literature on the subject also thought such diversity to be a good idea. However, in all three schools researched, Pakistani teachers were substantially under-represented amongst the workforce, compared to the proportion of pupil population who were Pakistani.

7.3 A responsive education service

It has been the aim of this study to identify ways for the education service to respond to the needs of Pakistani students, so more of them achieve the benchmark qualifications and receive a rounded education within the context of their religious and cultural context. There is much within general educational policy and practice that is potentially transferrable to the current study. Concepts such as multicultural education, culturally relevant pedagogy and community education have much to offer in this respect. I have drawn on the principles that underpin these concepts in order to respond to the needs and issues that have been flagged up by the wider literature as well as the findings of this research.

7.3.1 *Multicultural education*

Research has highlighted a number of measures which can be implemented by schools to raise the attainment of underachieving ethnic minority pupils. Tikly et al. (2006) spoke of 'conditions of success' in dealing with the needs of underachieving pupils. These included willingness of the governors and senior management, especially the

Headteacher, to address race equality issues in the school and commitment to mainstreaming initiatives to raise achievement. “Where schools have begun to make race equality an essential part of their normal activities - through professional development work; the routine gathering and analysis of ethnically-based data; and targeted programmes of support – impressive changes are evident” (p74). Given that schools have to provide for the needs of many groups, Tikly et al. (2006) pointed out that taking such an approach on race equality for one group need not mean excluding other groups of pupils. Instead “it means making a concern for race equality a central part of *all* (original emphasis) of the school’s quality assurance processes” (p74). Indeed, they go on to point out that once strategies are effectively mainstreamed “they can have a positive impact on the achievement of *all* (my emphasis) groups” (p74).

Multicultural education is seen to have a duty in clarifying and tackling the manifestations of inequality, racism and discrimination within its own institutions and in the wider society. There is emphasis on equality of opportunity as well as equality of outcome (Ross, 2009) and the general curriculum on offer is inclusive and reflects the diversity of the wider society. For the DFES (2004), the institutional context was important; “practical support that a school is able to provide to its pupils is more likely to succeed if it is undertaken in a context where issues of equality and diversity are central to the school's basic systems and processes” (p8). Numerous others have arrived at a similar conclusion (Swann, 1985; Blair & Bourne, 2000; DFES, 2003; Banks, 2004; Tomlinson, 2008; Gillborn, 2008; 2013). There was also isolated opposition expressed towards multicultural education, as included in a collection of writings by Palmer (1986). Recently the debate was reignited by Trevor Phillips (2005) in his criticism of multiculturalism, pointing out that it led to segregation of ethnic and racial groups. Others (Modood, 2013) have since responded to the debate by pointing out that

multiculturalism had been misunderstood and that it was a good thing to promote in our society.

It is worth remembering here that with the Coalition government in 2010, came the era of ‘absent presence’ (Apple, 1999) of a number of priorities relevant to this study. For example, the Education Secretary, Michael Gove de-prioritised community cohesion as ‘peripheral’ (Harrison, 2010). Previously this was central to inspection of schools by Ofsted (DCSF, 2007b). This can also be seen in the current teacher standards (DFE, 2011).

7.3.1.1 Culturally responsive pedagogy

Similar to multicultural education is the concept of culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP). It arises mainly from an American context (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Richards et al., 2006; Hayes & Juárez, 2012; Gay, 2013). To deliver it effectively, the pedagogy needs to be based upon and proceeds from the cultural perspectives of the group of people for whom it is designed, in our case Pakistani pupils. CRP builds on the ideas of Moll et al. (1992) and their concept ‘funds of knowledge’, which can enable teachers to connect with their pupils as whole beings. It rejects the deficit-based beliefs (Yosso, 2005) that some teachers may hold, especially about minority students and operates from a standpoint of recognising student strengths, seeking to build on them.

CRP uses the cultural knowledge, prior experiences and frames of reference of the students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them.

According to Richards et al. (2006), a number of dimensions of CRP interact in the teaching and learning process and are critical to understanding the effectiveness of the

pedagogy: (a) institutional, (b) personal, (c) instructional and (d) systemic. The institutional dimension refers to the policies and values of the school as an organisation. The personal refers to the processes teachers must engage in to become culturally responsive. Here, it is worth reminding ourselves of the concept ‘teacher identity as pedagogy’; who they are matters just as much as what they do (Swann, 1985; Morgan, 2004). This, therefore, has implications for the ethnic background of the teachers as well as the extent of their cultural competence. The instructional dimension refers to the resources, strategies, and activities utilised while the systemic dimension addresses the socio-political context within education and society over time while simultaneously fostering students' abilities to achieve high levels of academic success and cultural competence.

CRP recognises that students whose cultural knowledge is most congruent with mainstream ways of knowing and being, are more likely to experience cognitive comfort and better educational outcomes in schools; what Reay (2004) describe as the ‘habitus’ of the pupils fitting the ‘field’ of the school. It thus sets out to reduce the ‘discontinuities’ (Tyler, 2008) between their home and school lives. By building bridges of meaningfulness between home and school experiences, the different worlds of the students can be connected i.e. in-school learning with out-of-school living. CRP, therefore, can be a means for improving achievement by teaching diverse students through their own cultural filters. It requires teachers to understand the cultures represented in their classroom and enables them to relate to their students at a deeper level, as social and cultural beings connected to a complex social and cultural network. However, to do so may necessitate the teachers to visit the neighbourhoods and homes of the students, in order to appreciate where the students live, what is important to them and what and who they care about. Sometimes, just informal conversation with

students by genuinely interested teachers can elicit such information. Equipped with such understanding, teachers will be in a position to use the families and communities as a resource. Lipman (1995) spoke of culturally relevant teaching, that “uses the students’ culture to help them achieve success” (p203). Culturally relevant teachers “build upon students’ cultural and experiential strengths to help them acquire new knowledge” (p203). Such teachers demonstrate ‘connectedness’ with students and extend relationships beyond the classroom.

7.3.2 Community education

In order to respond to the findings of this study, it would require collaboration between the state school system and the parents and the wider Pakistani Muslim community. The philosophy of community education and ‘community school’ (Grainger, 2003) offers a possible model which could be utilised here. Such schools are outward facing, rather than insular and inward-looking. They do not separate learners from their context but work in partnership with the wider community; with the clear intention to fully utilise its resources. Nisbet et al. (1980) see such schools as ‘community plant’ whose use should not be restricted to one age group only or to certain hours and days. For them the key elements that characterise such schools include mutually supportive relationships between, and sharing of facilities by, school and community; community-oriented curriculum and community involvement in decision-making and management of schools. The concept of ‘community education’ is similar to what was described as Schools Plus (DfEE, 2000a). The, then, Minister for School Standards, Estelle Morris had stated that “School Plus activities can make a real difference to the lives of pupils and others in the community” (p1). They spoke of a two-way partnership - ‘community in the school and the school in the community’ - with both working in the other’s ‘space’. The DFEE (1999) provided examples of links between schools and their communities. Elsewhere (DCSF, 2008), schools were asked to offer madrassahs the use

of their premises. Furthermore, it was recommended that Ofsted should consider how examples of effective community activity can best be highlighted through inspections, both of schools and local education authorities.

7.3.2.1 Local curriculum

The RSA 'area based curriculum' project has offered similar ideas to community education (2012). Instead of asking 'what should the curriculum include' in their view the starting question should always be 'who should determine what the curriculum includes'? An area-based curriculum for them helps to create connections with the communities, cities and cultures that surround the school and by distributing the education effort across the people, organisations and institutions of a local area. It helps to open up the school space for conversations with local communities about the purpose of education; in order to help create a national curriculum but with local dimensions (Tomlinson, 2008).

The RSA proposed a way forward for schools to develop a 'school curriculum' in partnership with their communities: local businesses, heritage and cultural organisations, faith communities and parents. Earlier, Waters (2007), the then, Director of Curriculum at the QCA, had stated that while it was important to have a common national core within the curriculum "there also needs to be a regional or local dimension and an element unique to each school" (p3). This could provide a model in the context of this study, in helping to design an education service which meets the needs of an ethnic minority (Pakistani) within the context of the society overall. Another similar concept is 'Community Curriculum Making' (Leat, 2015) which recognises the benefits for schools to develop some of their curriculum with community partners, using their resources. Could such a curriculum be developed by Birmingham schools, in partnership with the

Pakistani community? In the new education landscape of academies, it would be possible for a multi-academy trust to embark on such a project for their group of schools and later shared it with others more widely. Local teachers (Reed, 2009) and others who have a good understanding of the area would clearly be an asset.

7.4 More effective education of Pakistani boys

There are numerous examples within education of targeted strategies to address educational underachievement of specific groups, such as the many strategies aimed at addressing underachievement of Black pupils and Black boys (see page 32) and the education of White working class children (Burden, 2013; Strand, 2013; House of Commons, 2014). I believe such a targeted approach is necessary in education policy and practice to raise Pakistani boys' attainment. For it to be successful, it would need to be embedded within the school improvement system and be 'ecological' (Finigan-Carr, et al., 2015; Iruka et al., 2015); with a focus on a range of areas and issues, inside school and in the wider lives of the boys. This is based on a belief that children develop over time within interrelated systems that exist at levels proximal and distal to the child (O'Connor & McCartney, 2007). According to Feinstein (2004), to address inequalities requires investment in pre-school provision as well as enhanced investments throughout school. Elsewhere Feinstein (2003) has argued for provision of adaptive and informed services, personalised to the developmental needs of, (in our case), Pakistani children. He spoke of 'progressive universalism' which requires understanding the diverse needs and aspirations of children and families, "with extra, targeted resources available to address those developmental needs not met by the standard, whole class school system" (p218). For him, the interventions might be school-led or involve support for out-of-school activities.

Ladson-Billings' concept of 'education debt' (2006) has some relevance here. She explained that a focus on the achievement gap was misplaced. What was needed instead was to look at the 'education debt' that had accumulated over time, comprising historical, economic socio-political and moral components. In relation to Pakistani children, the debt has accumulated over many years. It has been known, since at least the early 1990s, that Pakistani children, especially boys, were underachieving. The question that arises is whether enough has been done to help address the problem. We know of at least one occasion (Strand et al., 2010; see p35-36) when the highest authority in education, the Department for Children, Schools and Families, deliberately excluded Pakistani children from a policy intervention, in order to avoid presenting a more negative picture on education of Muslims. We also know (see p38) that Birmingham Council predicted, without any backing evidence, that low attainment of Pakistani children would sort itself out and BRAP Chair Warmington (see p38) failed to represent the problem of Pakistani underachievement to Parliament when she had the chance to do so.

Earlier Foster (1990) had pointed out that equality of opportunity only had meaning if those who began with unequal chances had unequal investment; arguing that they needed to be compensated through positive discrimination – through the provision of additional resources. "The idea is that additional educational resources should be provided in schools not just to those who are disadvantaged by virtue of home background, but to those students who fail, for whatever reason, to achieve certain minimum standards" (p187). But such ideas are not new. Many years ago Bowles (1968) had said that "achievement of equality of educational opportunity requires inequalities in the amount of resources devoted to the education of black children and white children, and of rich children and poor children" (p90), as "equal school inputs will not produce

equal school outputs” (p95). However, he pointed out that such a policy response was controversial as “it will involve favouring the interests of the poor and the powerless to the detriment of the interests of those better endowed with wealth and influence” (p99).

Tough (2006) explained that if we wished to close the education gap between disadvantaged children and their advantaged peers, we would need to not provide the same education for disadvantaged children that advantaged children received, but one that was considerably better. There are a number of ways of doing so for Pakistani boys. The legislative framework for this is provided by the Equality Act 2010. The law has put in place the Equality Duty on public sector bodies as well as specific duty on specified bodies, such as schools. In the context of schools the equality duty helps to focus attention on performance gaps between groups of pupils. The EHRC (2012) spelled this out with two examples, relating to underachievement. After analysing its data the academy school in one example concluded that its Bangladeshi pupils were underachieving compared to other pupils when previous attainment was taken into account. Given the large numbers of Bangladeshi pupils the academy decided this was a priority. They decided to set an equality objective to tackle the underachievement identified. In order to achieve this, they planned to undertake a range of activities including study skills support, mentoring, additional classes and higher education visits. They helpfully pointed out that the activities “are lawful positive action measures that contribute to meeting the duty to have due regard to advancing equality of opportunity” (p6). Another example referred to challenges which prevented some ethnic minority pupils from participating in extracurricular activities and interacting with pupils outside of their own ethnic group. These ideas have the potential of being applied to the situation of Pakistani children in Birmingham. Instead of ‘educational drift’³⁸, such

³⁸ After ‘multicultural drift’ (Parekh, 2000)

purposeful process of change is more likely to address the issue of Pakistani underachievement.

7.4.1 Taking a strategic approach, with the end in mind

In the past (DFES, 2004) government advice has been that LAs should have a clear strategy for enhancing the achievement of minority ethnic pupils, as a part of their Education Development Plan. It was suggested that LA inspectors should support schools, such as in the analysis of data, action-planning and target setting. Tikly et al. (2002), in their report for the DFES, similarly advised that LAs should support schools in their effort to raise achievement, by providing training, resources and sharing good practice.

Given that the achievement of Pakistani pupils is not an issue for one school but one affecting education across Birmingham, requires a strategic approach; one that is underpinned by a spirit of ‘transformative accommodation’ (Shachar, 2004) and ‘additive bilingualism’ (Peal & Lambert, 1962). Moreover, I am suggesting that the ‘logic model’ of policy intervention (Kellogg Foundation, 2004) should be adopted here. This was briefly implemented by Birmingham Children’s Services during the time I worked there as an Adviser (2001-2011). The model starts with the end in mind and works backward i.e. what outcome do we desire and how will we attain it. Its elements are resources, activities, outputs and (short, intermediate and long-term) outcomes. However, here it is necessary to point out that, within the current education landscape, such a task falls on more than one body. The education scene is very different now. Whereas previously local education authorities were the ‘middle tier’ (Hill, 2012) – between schools and central government - as a result of the government’s academy programme (NAO, 2010), their role has been reduced. Much of the work done previously by LAs has either stopped altogether or has become the domain of others,

such as Multi-Academy Trusts (MAT). This is an education organisational structure which usually has within it a number of academy schools. The trust acts as the accountable body for the schools. Ninestiles MAT is one such, Birmingham-based, schools structure, which I am familiar with, through my role as a Director. It has seven schools within it – three secondary and four primary. It has adopted an equality and diversity policy (Ninestiles MAT, 2016). With reference to staffing, the policy aspires for its workforce profile to broadly reflect the community it serves. It commits the organisation to promote a positive narrative around equality, continually monitor the situation and take positive action to provide encouragement and support to individuals and groups (such as the Pakistanis in this case). By looking at the outcome the Trust is able to achieve, we will know in due course how effective the policy has been. The structure is also there for the MAT to establish similar strategies on educational achievement of particular groups such as Pakistani boys.

I am suggesting that, like the Birmingham achievement action plans (BCC, 2003), underachievement of Pakistani boys should be treated in a multifaceted way. Here, ways were identified in which the Local Authority could intervene, such as through work with schools, provision of services to underachieving groups and strategic leadership and management. But that was then. It is possible, that within the new education landscape the response to Pakistani boys' education would result in more than one plan, from a number of bodies (e.g. BEP, multi-academy trusts, single schools and academies).

Ceci and Papierno (2005) observe that where gap-narrowing interventions were universalised – given not only to the group of children who most need assistance but also to the more advantaged group, the gap can get even bigger. In my view this can be avoided by implementing targeted Positive Action strategies for Pakistani children who

underachieve. Here, the work of one Birmingham school, Broadway Academy, provides an example. It has a significant Pakistani pupil population whose attainment is lower than other pupil groups. According to a paper the school had produced for the Lead Ofsted Inspector (Broadway, 2016), it was acknowledged that “Pakistani students’ attainment was much lower than the national... and this became an acknowledged area for improvement.” It was pointed out that through targeted intervention, the school had managed to make improvements. In its plan for the academic year - 2015-2016- the strategies included inviting, to the school, local and national British Pakistani role models and working in partnership with parents. The problem was clearly being treated as a mainstream matter. It was an integral part of the school’s performance management priorities: “*All* (my emphasis) staff to have a performance target relating to Raising Achievement of Pakistani pupils” (Broadway, 2015).

7.4.1.1 Funding

The resourcing of education is another change that has taken place recently. Previously, funds, such as Section 11 and subsequently EMAG, would be allocated to local authorities to help them to implement initiatives for ethnic minority underachieving pupils. Given the incorporation of this category of funding into the schools’ DSG (direct school grant), and the size of the problem, of Pakistani underachievement, facing Birmingham would require a mainstream, system-wide approach to be taken. However, it may help to focus activity through the identification of ‘ring-fenced’ funding such as MEAG in Wales.

Pupil Premium is likely to be of benefit to Pakistani children, given their greater prevalence of being FSM. It has further potential to be used for Pakistani-specific initiatives (Carpenter et al., 2013). Could a case be made to Central Government for

secondary schools to be paid additional premium on the basis of children's low prior attainment as had been propose by Chowdry and Sibieta (2010). For example, Community in my study reported that, in 2014, all of its pupils entered with prior attainment significantly below the national average. This was especially the case for Pakistani children, many of whom remained behind other children throughout their schooling. Given that Pakistani children are likely to be EAL, a further case could be made for an EAL premium, also considered before, by Chowdry et al. (2010).

7.5 Improving madrassah education

The study began with the assumption that, given their age, the Year 11 Pakistani boys would not be participating in after-school religious classes. However, this was not the case. Given that education for Pakistani boys and their parents is considered broader than what is on offer within the state school system, suggests an obvious area where interventions need to be made. By doing things better and differently for their deen, religious education, improvements can be made in the dunya, of the world, education.

7.5.1 More effective curriculum

One way of maximising the impact of madrassah education would be to have in place effective curriculum and teaching. I would like to suggest to the Pakistani parents and community that they heed the advice of respected Muslims such as Brohi (1979), Sahin (2005) and Sai (2017) and attend to the pedagogical issues related to the Islamic Religious Education. Mogra (2007) had said that curriculum development within madrassahs had not been given sufficient priority. Is it time for this to be addressed? He had reviewed resources which had been produced by a Council of Religious Scholars in South Africa but which could be useful in the British context. A more relevant set of materials could be the ones produced by An Nasihah Publications. According to their

website³⁹ they have been in existence since 2008. Recently they have produced ‘enjoyable’, ‘child friendly’ and ‘age-appropriate’ resources. According to their launch video, the materials have been designed specifically for the young Muslims of today which draw on mainstream ideas of education such as Bloom’s Taxonomy.

Once steps have been taken to properly resource the provision of madrassahs and the recruitment and training of their staff, it would be helpful to bring their work within the education inspection framework as recommended by Birdwell et al. (2015). They reported a similar approach being taken within the Scottish system. A significant driver of this policy was the recognition that non-formal learning and community organisations played a significant role in the development of young people. By developing a similar model of inspection in England, Ofsted could look at the ‘big picture’ of children’s learning (Waters, 2007; Bartlet et al., 2008) than that which has a narrow, purely school-based, focus. As in Scotland, a dual community-school inspection process would encourage cooperation between schools and non-formal education providers.

7.5.2 Incorporating madrassah education within the state system

Research (Richardson & Wood, 2004) has shown that school and madrassah are often experienced *separately* by many of the Pakistani and other Muslim children. It is possible that there are benefits of the two working together. Cherti and Bradley (2011) recommended that there should be greater partnership between them and the state education sector, especially to facilitate the training of staff and to create greater coherence in the lives of the children. The DFES (2004) had reported that “most

³⁹ www.nasihah.com

effective schools” had actively developed relationships with parents, local community and supplementary schools. In pointing out its benefits, it was stated “sharing of experience and knowledge between mainstream and supplementary schools can bring significant and mutual benefits to both, e.g. through better cultural awareness, curriculum enrichment and coordinated support in and out of school that focuses on the needs of the child” (p11). Later, the DFES (2007) had cited examples of good practice where schools had established close links with madrassahs, “through inviting teachers to attend training, sharing attainment data on pupils and providing resources to the supplementary schools” (p16).

Two recent reports offer some possible ways forward. The first (Nwulu, 2015) showed that supplementary schools helped to nurture the culture, heritage and language(s) of the children who attend them⁴⁰. 85 per cent of schools were found to teach culture and heritage and 79 per cent community or mother tongue languages. Religious teaching was offered by just under half of the supplementary schools, with Islam (52 percent) being the most commonly taught religion. According to the report the supplementary schools act as a bridge between the children and their parents and the wider community. They help to reflect the identity of children and provide positive role models and host culturally familiar spaces where children can be themselves. For Nwulu, wherever possible and appropriate, mainstream schools should open up professional learning opportunities to staff from supplementary schools and for teaching schools alliances (TSAs)⁴¹ to extend their CPD offer to supplementary schools. Furthermore, it was

⁴⁰ The report, within the UK context, was produced under the guidance of an expert group of practitioners, policymakers and academics, with expertise around BME achievement or supplementary schools.

⁴¹ Teaching schools are outstanding schools that work with others to provide high-quality training and development to new and experienced school staff

recommended that the state schools should consider using Pupil Premium funding to support partnerships with supplementary schools. More generally, it might be worth exploring some of the European models of practice (Berglund, 2015) in supporting madrassah education at school.

The second report, into the work of the non-faith supplementary school sector (Ramalingam & Griffith, 2015)⁴² recommended greater complementarity and coordination between madrassahs and the mainstream education system. For them this would help the state sector to become better engaged in their communities. “In doing so, they can raise the capacity of those communities, and of parents, to take ownership of their children's education. They can help ensure that out-of-school learning and enrichment opportunities are high-quality, and open and accessible to all pupils, particularly those who need them the most” (p4). The report provided a roadmap for how the state sector could engage with supplementary schools, which could offer a model of practice for Birmingham.

Given that the madrassah system plays such a major part in the lives of Pakistani boys, it is legitimate to discuss its role in improving their levels of attainment. While one encounters isolated examples of good practice⁴³, the system overall continues to offer a poor service - lacking structured and accredited curriculum; staffed by low paid and unqualified teachers who are often not checked for safeguarding. Given that this

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/474309/Teaching_Schools_the_school_perspective.pdf Downloaded 9.6.2016

⁴² A qualitative report, also within the UK context, where data were gathered through study visits.

⁴³ <http://www.phf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Paiwand-case-study.pdf> Downloaded 1.12.2015

impacts on the education of large numbers of Muslim children (not just those from the Pakistani community), it calls for improvement at a systemic level.

A small number (nearly one third) of the Pakistani pupils stated that what they learnt in their madrassah classes should be taught at the school. A few parents supported this too. One suggested that this extra religious teaching could be delivered through classes held at the school before or after the normal day (such as those held in the extended schools model; (Cummings et al., 2007; Dyson & Kirstin, 2014).

One way of making improvements in this context would be through resourcing of madrassahs. They are usually poorly resourced (Nwulu, 2015). If they are to improve their standards and make a contribution to Pakistani children's achievement then they will need external help. Warraich and Nawaz (2005) had recommended the setting up of a Muslim-led resource unit, for the development of curricula in madrassahs. In addition to teaching the Quran, they saw it important for the madrassah curricula to complement the work of the state education system. Coles (2008) recommended that madrassahs should be supported to enable the development of effective links with mainstream schools. Here, the National Resource Centre for Supplementary Education (NRC⁴⁴) could be a model. This may help to ensure madrassahs meet minimum standards, with basic policies and procedures, to protect and support children. Madrassahs could be helped in producing curricula on Islam and training of the teachers who work there. Based on the NRC model, there could be a range of training programmes for all involved in the supplementary schools. The IPPR resource (2015) could also be useful in this context. It covers mapping of provision, establishing networks, pupil referrals

⁴⁴ <http://www.supplementaryeducation.org.uk/supplementary-education-the-nrc/> Accessed 2.12.2015

and sharing premises, staffing, training and curriculum resources between the two sectors.

The education of Pakistani children could be improved through partnership of schools and madrassahs; to deliver homework and other school-related provision at the madrassah or IRE at after-school homework clubs, as suggested by Scourfield et al. (undated). This could be modelled on the kind of provision the middle class Pakistanis had established (see Grammar parent Syed, chapter 4). There is potential here to explore the provision set up by QED (QED-UK, 2015) and the Pakistani community in Slough (Shah et al., 2010). Also the Swedish example could be transferred here; there once the children have studied the Quran and basics of Islam the remainder of their time at the madrassah is devoted to the Swedish national syllabi. Whichever option is pursued, it would require investment into the infrastructure of madrassahs and capacity building of other community organisations within the Pakistani community.

7.5.3 Reducing madrassah attendance

Pakistani young people clearly have long learning days. As well as attendance at school they spend significant time at madrassah. In addition, some may also attend a madrassah or mosque before school. This raises the question whether their time is being spent efficiently and effectively. Could steps be taken to improve what they do during this time, such as make their madrassah learning more complementary to what they do at school?

7.5.3.1 The role of primary schools

Strand (2011) suggested that in order to address ethnic differences at age 14 “a key focus should be on processes occurring during the primary school phase” (p215). Could we similarly focus on the primary phase, in the provision of madrassah education? This

would mean that by the time the Pakistani children start their secondary education they might have completed their Quranic and Islamic learning, thus freeing them to concentrate more of their time and energy on their non-religious, duniya, education and development.

7.5.3.2 Urdu, Arabic and Islamic Studies at school

Given that the madrassah education in the UK exists to fill a gap in what is seen as essential for them by their parents i.e. knowledge and understanding of their religion and the Holy Quran and competence in mother tongue (Khan-Cheema, 1994), the challenge for the state education system, in areas such as Birmingham, could be to help remove the gap, so the Muslim children do not need to attend madrassah for such long periods of their lives.

For Muslims, the Quran has a central place in their belief system. Although it is on occasions read without being understood, understanding it is seen to be critical if it is to be used as a guide for actions (al-Saud 1979). However, it is recognised that it is impossible to reach the desired understanding without prior study of the language in which it has been revealed, Arabic. Al-Saud (1979) makes a case for the maintenance of the Arabic language “not because it is the national tongue of the Arabs, but because it is the language of the Quran, and therefore the language of Islam” (p131).

Swann (1985) was “wholeheartedly in favour of the teaching of ethnic minority community languages, within the languages curriculum of maintained secondary schools, open to all pupils whether ethnic minority or ethnic majority” (p406). A number of Birmingham schools already offer Urdu as a part of their normal curriculum, including at GCSE level. Now, a few also offer Arabic. Community, one of the schools

in my study, has provided Urdu as a part of its normal languages curriculum. At the time of my research, it was about to start offering Arabic as well. Could such provision be expanded across Birmingham?

Warraich and Nawaz (2005) stated that madrassahs should provide accredited courses, such as Islamic Studies at GCSE. This would provide an incentive for children undertaking such study and help to 'synergise' the work of the mosques and madrassahs with the state education system. One Birmingham school, Queensbridge, has for many years offered Islamic Studies as a GCSE subject. Some of the students progress from this to the A level course at Cadbury Sixth Form College, also in Birmingham. If more schools made available such provision then a case could be made with the Muslim community to reduce the amount of time its young spent in madrassah classes. The schools could also offer such a qualification in partnership with local madrassahs. It would be reasonable to expect the teaching in this context to be done by Muslim teachers. However, given the shortage of such teachers, the job would initially have to be done by non-Muslim teachers. This was the case in both the above schools where the teachers were Christian and it had raised no objections from the Muslim community. Berkson (2005) identified a number of challenges that can arise in such a situation, especially one relating to the question of authenticity. He suggested the way to overcome this would be through the involvement of imams (Lewis, 2006) and other visiting speakers, from the Muslim community. A more long-term strategy would require the recruitment and training of Muslim teachers such as through the type of scheme identified by Campbell and Felderhof (2007). This would be achieved through a system-wide collaboration, involving the Department for Education, individual schools, MATs, the local authority and the Pakistani community.

7.5.4 *Madrassah at school*

Reference has been made to extended schools interventions which addressed barriers to learning and achieved positive outcomes for disadvantaged children, as seen by a narrowing of the gap in attainment for FSM and non-FSM children (Cummings et al. 2007; Dyson & Kerr, 2014). Their development had resulted in directing funding to a number of schools to enable them to offer additional services, over a longer day. The schools offered, generally between 8am and 6pm, additional activities and services to some or all of the children, families and local communities, including access to study support, adult learning and a range of extracurricular activities. For the QCA, extended hours provision can bring far reaching benefits – to the school, to students, to families and the community in general (Bartlett et al., 2008).

Within the US, the KIPP schools operated a similar long learning day. They asked students to commit to arriving at school from 7.25 AM and remain there until 5 PM (Lack, 2009). This type of approach within the state education sector was seen as desirable by Michael Gove, Education Secretary. In a speech, (DfE 3 February 2014), he stated that state schools, like their independent peers, should offer a school day 9 or 10 hours long. For him this would make time for “after-school sports matches, orchestra rehearsals, debating competitions, coding clubs, cadet training, Duke of Edinburgh award schemes and inspirational careers talks from outside visitors, just like in independent schools.”

Although, it is possible that this was not what Gove had in mind, the above does provide a framework within which more culturally and religiously appropriate activities could be provided for Pakistani youngsters. Schools could, for example, include

teaching of the Quran in their menu of activities. There has been isolated support for taking such an approach. Sinnott, the General Secretary of the National Union of Teachers was reported (Garner, 2008) as being supportive of the idea of schools inviting in imams (and rabbis for Jewish children), to provide IRE. In his view this would help to better ‘accommodate’ Muslims within the education system. Here, it is worth referring to CORAB (2015), which called on the government to:

expect publicly funded schools to be open for the provision of religion-or-belief-specific teaching and worship on the school premises outside of the timetable for those who request it and wish to participate; this would be in line with the autonomy of young people and their human right to freedom of religion or belief (p82).

Based on the principle ‘more time in school equals more success in life’, the US KIPP schools have also been reported to operate a longer learning week (through the organisation of Saturday schools) and longer learning year – three weeks of planned programme during the summer (Lack, 2009). The attendance at these additional activities form a part of their community’s – teachers’, students’ and parents’ – contract. While there, the students are exposed to extracurricular and enrichment activities. Schools and the Pakistani parents could explore these options for their young people, both for ‘madrassah’ teaching and as an opportunity to catch up with school work.

Research has shown that ‘summer learning effect’ is an issue which affects the education of disadvantaged children (Lauer et al., 2006; Kim & Quinn, 2013). Slates et al. (2012) pointed that school environment is a compensatory factor for disadvantaged students; “without schooling, [they] fall behind, which implies that resources available

to them and their family environments account for the shortfall in their learning during the summer months” (p166). They recommended a structured response to addressing the ‘summer learning effect’ such as through increased availability of books through libraries. While I did not investigate this issue during my research, there is anecdotal evidence, gained over many years of living amongst the Pakistani community in Birmingham, which shows that ‘summer learning effect’ is an issue for Pakistani students. . A better use of the summer (and other) school holidays could thus make a positive difference. At the least, the schools could provide their premises so the parents could organise before/after school and holiday learning programmes – including religious instruction classes. This would be possible at a school such as Community, which is open during the evenings and weekends, all year round, for a range of leisure and education activities for adults and young people.

7.6 Teacher role

Teachers play a critical role in the education process. Who they are as well as their knowledge level are both important. Pakistani pupils were asked whether it was necessary for them to be taught by teachers from their own religious or ethnic group. The majority said: it did not matter who the teachers were or their backgrounds. Amongst the interviewees – boys and their parents – there was an equal split. Half of them stated it was important to have Pakistani teachers, while the other half said it did not matter what background the teachers were; the quality of their input was the key. However, here it is worth reporting that the boys and the parents in the latter category did consider it important for the teachers to have an understanding of Pakistani heritage. It is also necessary to point out that, given the overwhelming support in the literature reviewed for diversity in the teaching workforce, this is a matter that will require some attention by Birmingham schools. A number of reasons have already been

cited above, for having a diverse teaching workforce. Of particular relevance here is the concept 'inclusive diversity' (Ross, 2001), where it is not just important for Pakistani pupils to be taught *directly* by Pakistani or Muslim teachers but more an indirect benefit; by having them on the staff, to see them around the school and have occasional contact with them such as the role played by the one part-time Pakistani Grammar teacher Masood. As to what to do, previous initiatives and efforts could be revisited, in order to use as a model for increasing Pakistani and Muslim teacher diversity. Given the significance of religion and increasing incidence of Islamophobia (Lopez, 2011), the presence of Pakistani Muslim teachers is even more pertinent, including as a guard against 'stereotype threat' (Steele & Aronson, 1995). This was a problem which had been reported by Abbas (2004). His research had been conducted amongst Pakistani Muslims in Birmingham who had reported having negative experiences at the hands of their White teachers

Both the Birmingham examples, cited in chapter 2, are worth referring here and repeating as initiatives, in order to increase teacher diversity especially of Pakistanis. One was the MERITT scheme, from Birmingham Education Department (BCC, 2008a) and the other was scheme developed within Westhill College of HE, to help train Muslim teachers (Campbell & Felderhof 2007). These initiatives could help to recruit local people into the schools (Reed, 2009). This could be as teachers as well as to a range of other roles. During my many years working as a Schools Adviser I noticed that there were often more ethnic minority staff in support roles – teaching assistants, learning mentors – than the numbers employed as teachers. It could be the case that some of the support staff may wish to become teachers. Helping them achieve that goal would be an example of Positive Action. A course of this type was on offer at Loughborough University until a few years ago, which was popular with minority ethnic Teaching

Assistants especially with Pakistani females with caring responsibilities (Davies, 2016). Wilshaw, the then head of Ofsted, supported 'positive discrimination' when he was reported as saying that if the ethnic mix of pupils is very diverse, "it's important to have a staff which reflects that" and "headteachers faced with equal candidates for a teaching post should consider 'positive discrimination'" (Coughlan, 2015). Of course, we do not know whether and how having a diverse teaching workforce and, in particular Pakistani teachers, would make a difference to raising educational standards for Pakistani children in Birmingham. This is something for future researchers to explore.

7.6.1 Teacher understanding

A significant number of Pakistani students had stated that it was important for teachers to have an understanding of the pupils' heritage. A number of teacher interviewees saw such understanding to be central to the teaching and learning process. For them it was central to raising standards (see sections 6.4.1, p205-208 and 6.4.3, p215-216). In the light of this it is highly important that individual schools, TSAs and bodies such as BEP enable teachers to gain such understanding so that a "positive account is taken of the faith dimension of Muslim pupils in education and schooling" (MCB, 2007, p17). This is now an even greater need given that such matters related to diversity have been de-prioritised in ITT.

7.6.1.1 Religiously literate teachers

Given the significant presence of religion in this study teachers will need to have increased knowledge of Islam. One way of achieving this would be through a 'funds of knowledge' (Moll et al. 1992) approach, where teachers go out into their community, especially to access the 'Islamic funds of knowledge' (Shalabi & Taylor, 2011). Imams (Lewis, 2006) and other community learning champions (DFEE, 2000a) could play a

key role here as a resource. Through my education consultancy work, I came across an example of this, though not in Birmingham. A primary school in Bristol had devoted a whole CPD Day to facilitate its teachers visiting their mainly Somali Muslim parents in order to learn from them.

A particular need to address here is the acquisition by teachers of religious literacy. This was defined as “the skills and knowledge required to engage in an informed and confident way with faith communities” (DCLG, 2008, p33). Earlier, religious literacy was described as

skills in understanding and assessing religious statements and behaviour; discerning the difference between valuable and harmful aspects of religion and religions; appreciating religious architecture, art, literature and music without necessarily accepting all the beliefs that they express or assume; and making reasonable accommodation between people holding different religious and non-religious worldviews (GLA, 2007, p9).

Griffiths-Dickson (2015) likened such literacy “to the religious equivalent of emotional intelligence; a matter of knowledge, but also an ability to be informed, aware, at home with diverse religions; the ability to conduct oneself well when questions of faith and belief come to the fore”. Recently CORAB (2015) has reiterated the need for religion and belief literacy especially amongst those in educational establishments.

7.6.1.2 Role of the specialist teachers

Given the size of the task at hand, especially in areas such as Birmingham, it may benefit the system to employ specialist teachers who would have particular expertise and responsibility for raising the attainment of Pakistani pupils in particular and education of Muslim children at a general level. Bhopal and Rhamie (2014) had suggested that local

authorities should be encouraged to develop such teacher posts for diversity. At a general level, Ameli et al. (2005), in answering the question: what schools do British Muslims want, recommended that the state education system should provide accommodation of religious needs, use students' faith identity to raise attainment (such as in the benchmark GCSE qualifications), improve education about Islam, institute religious awareness training for staff and governors and offer better teacher training on diversity.

7.6.2 Religiously inclusive curriculum practices

MCB (2007) published guidance for schools to guide them in their work with (Pakistani) Muslim children. In their view an inclusive curriculum requires full accommodation of the pupils' religion such as through provision of space and facilities for daily prayers. This would help to challenge the majoritarian narratives that often shape the school curriculum (Fránquiz et al. 2011). The guidance had been well received. Tim Brighouse, the previous Chief Education Officer for Birmingham and now a Schools Commissioner for London schools, was a "chief guest" at its launch. He endorsed the guidance in these words: "I could tell you 500 schools in Birmingham would welcome this document and that's in Birmingham alone. And I can tell you another 3,000 schools in London would welcome this document. I read it cover to cover. I think it's a fantastic document."⁴⁵ Schools were also advised to develop curriculum materials and perspectives that reflected Muslim contributions to the contemporary world (Coles, 2008). Ofsted (2004) provided an example of a school serving a mainly Bangladeshi Muslim population where the mathematics department acknowledged the Islamic contribution to the subject. DFES (2006b) spoke of teachers making use of resources that reflected the pupils' heritage, such as "studying literature by Muslim authors and highlighting contributions made by Muslim scientists and mathematicians" (p14). An

⁴⁵ <http://www.iccuk.org/page.php?section=media&article=22> Accessed 15.10.2016.

example of accommodation of Muslim pupils' needs was provided by DFEE (2000), where schools timed their homework clubs to fit with the students' madrassah classes. Elsewhere, DFES (2007a) provided examples of Muslim-friendly school practices, including holding whole-school *iftari* (the meal served when the fast is broken) in Ramadan involving parents and community members and using local imams to act as academic mentors. They also referred to schools liaising with the local mosque to work with families where attendance had been an issue.

Within responsive schools, there is a focus on the development of the 'whole child' and needs of all students are accommodated within a spirit of respect for cultures, religions and languages of groups such as Pakistanis and Muslims (Coles & Chilvers 2004; Coles 2008). There are high expectations of all pupils, with monitoring of their achievement and targeting specific areas of need. Education is seen as a partnership, which encourages and facilitates active and full involvement of parents and the wider community, in this case of Pakistani heritage. Responsive schools provide for their staff opportunities to understand the culture and background of their students and have a policy for recruitment and retention of staff with similar cultural and ethnic backgrounds to those in the pupil population.

7.7. Further role of the Pakistani parents and the Pakistani community

The Pakistani family has generally been found to have a positive influence on their children's education. My research has found parents to have respect for education; something which they passed on to their children. This was verified by the boys during the interviews. The family were also a source for role models for the boys, a number of whom reported looking up to their parents, siblings and members of the extended

family. However, it would appear that there is room for improvement. A number of students reported that their family responsibilities interfered with their education. This was more of an issue for the boys than girls. This may be something for parents to reflect. Some students said they lacked a quiet space to do homework. This may have been due to the family culture within which many Pakistanis live their lives; there is always something going on - a death, a celebration, a visit from relatives – which can distract from or disturb children doing their school work. Hopefully, when the findings of this study become known by the Pakistani community, it will lead to discussion and appropriate action.

Beyond individual parents there are possible areas for consideration by the Pakistani community. In chapter 1, I argued that the problem of Pakistani underachievement had been neglected. One reason for this had been a lack of pressure from within the community. Although they did campaign for the religion-related needs of their children to be accommodated by the education system (Joly, 1995), at a general level they were ‘accommodating’ and did not participate in ‘the politics of protest’ (Dench, 1986; Grosvenor, 1997). The community has to become more effective in drawing attention to its children’s needs and not give up until the whole system has made the required response. Here, in the light of the Trojan Horse controversy, it is necessary to say that any efforts the community makes would need to be undertaken within the laws and practices of education, equalities and human resources. One reason for this lack of community action could be an absence of appropriate community-based Pakistani organisations. To fill this gap would require schools and the community to work together in capacity-building⁴⁶ of parents and teachers so that they can together exploit

⁴⁶ Capacity building, according to Labonte and Laverack (2001), describes a “generic increase in community groups’ abilities to define, assess, analyze and act on health (or any other) concerns of importance to their members” (p114).

and generate education-based community social capital. According to Warren et al. (2009), this can be a particular need in disadvantaged communities where parents may lack relevant skills and knowledge and a sense of power and self-efficacy. They argue that when organisations are authentically rooted in community life, they can be a resource for schools in providing better understanding of the culture and assets of families. “As go-between, they are well situated to build relational bridges between educators and parents and act as catalysts for change” (p2214). From my knowledge of Birmingham, I know there are many individuals and some organisations in the Pakistani community who could potentially make a valuable contribution to ITT, schools’ CPD programmes and act as a curriculum resource.

The potential of the larger community to participate in the preparation of teachers for diverse contexts is yet to be realised. For Picower (2009), this could be as in-class guest speakers, mentors, or panel participants or offering sites for field trips and placements. This would be a way of challenging hegemonic stories by building empathy and new understandings. As well as mosque teachers (Lewis, 2006), there are likely to be many more people in Pakistani-Birmingham who may already fulfil the role of ‘Community Learning Champions’ (DFEE 2000a) and who could be a resource for teachers and schools.

A possible model of schools-Muslim community partnership is provided by Woods et al. (2013). Their case study centred on the ‘Tower Hamlets Story’ where there was a system-wide focus on local education and, the mainly Muslim, Bangladeshi community working together to raise educational standards and increase the number of Bangladeshi staff in the schools. However, in order to achieve such a partnership-relationship would require a certain level of trust, of the kind that exists between Community and the

Muslim religious leaders in the locality. Woods et al. (2013) stressed the importance of building partnerships, trust and capacity with school leaders but also informed partnerships with parents, community groups and governors. They saw such communities of active trust, engagement and advocacy bringing about school improvement.

High levels of trust seem to exist between school professionals, the community and the Local Authority so when there are problems and difficulties they are sorted out together rather than through conflict and confrontation (p50).

In Birmingham, the trust deficit is even greater as a result of the 'Trojan Horse'⁴⁷ affair (YouTube, 2014). The affair has caused rifts and alienation between the education system and the Pakistani Muslim community (Panjwani, 2014). Arthur (2015) has pointed out that in the light of 'Trojan Horse', Birmingham's Muslim population is being treated "as a 'suspect community' or even the 'enemy within'" (p320). Tim Boyes, CEO of BEP has been quoted as saying "We need to build trust and relationships, a sense of togetherness." He said the city's education sector had suffered "irreversible" damage in the wake of the scandal (McKinney, 2015). Tahir Alam, the previous chair of the governing body at, the then, Parkview School, one of the schools implicated in the Trojan Horse affair, has said: "Crucial teacher-pupil trust relationship has been violated. Soon Muslim parents may have no choice but to advise their children not to trust teachers and schools. A tragic loss for what education should be – engendering mutual trust and confidence..." (2015). Such trust would need to be made good before implementing some of the ideas suggested in this paper.

⁴⁷In my view whatever the truth of the affair, some of the pre- conditions existed already (Iqbal, 2014). Pidd (2014) quoted Christine Quinn, the then executive head of Ninestiles secondary and who later became the West Midlands Regional Schools Commissioner, saying that "some of the demands made (by Muslim parents) were entirely reasonable and based on the premise that Pakistani Muslim children had previously been very poorly served by the city's schools until the new millennium."

7.8 Limitations of the study and areas of further research

There are said to be two key expectations of educational research; that it should result in generalisations which will coalesce into educational theory, and that it should contribute in some way to improvement of educational practice (Bassey, 1981). I began the study with the aim of providing an argument to help make a difference in education, especially for Pakistani boys. This raises the question of whether those the study is aimed at (education practitioners and policy makers) are likely to have confidence in the ‘truth’ of the findings and the way in which the study was carried out. According to Guba (1981), this makes it necessary to test the credibility of the findings and interpretations. I have done so by referring to many different commentaries on the issues being researched.

Following Gardner’s advice (2011), I have strived to make my work accessible, relevant, persuasive, credible and authoritative in order to get my message across. I have taken whatever opportunity possible to expose my thinking to what Guba (1981) referred to as the ‘jury of peers’ and deal with their questions and challenges. This ‘peer debriefing’ enabled me to test my developing insights with education practitioners and others with a good level of understanding of the Pakistani community context. Throughout my six-year period as a doctoral student I have shared my ideas with numerous people, in diverse contexts. As well as numerous conversations with lay people in the educational and the wider community, Pakistanis and non-Pakistanis, I have participated in many conferences and presented my work to fellow academics. Gardner (2011) reminded us that “educational research generally does not have an immediate impact on policy or practice; indeed it may take many years for the insights from research to filter through” (p559). I have, nevertheless, attempted to share my research findings with education policy-makers and practitioners (Appendix 6). Although, the above activities have given me some confidence as to the applicability of the resulting recommendations, I am not

in a position to know whether these could be generalised beyond Birmingham. Another limitation of this could be the size of the sample. For example, interviewing 16 Pakistani parents, out of a possible population of up to two hundred thousand people may not be enough of a reflection. Again, this is something for future research to address.

I have arrived at some key conclusions which are likely to be both contentious and expensive, such as that schools should provide Urdu, Arabic and Islamic Studies in the curriculum and possible further teaching of the Quran. In chapter 6, I explored ways of improving teacher responsiveness, including an increased presence and contribution of Pakistani and Muslim teachers. I suggested ways to improve teacher understanding of Pakistani Muslim heritage. Here it is necessary to acknowledge that these conclusions are based on a very small sample. The issues raised need further exploration with the help of a much larger sample. It is also true that the focus of my research has been the secondary phase. While I have sometimes suggested there may be implications for the primary phase (for example that there could be an increased focus on Pakistani boys' IRE, see section 8.6.3.1), I have not discussed this matter with teachers, parents or students. Here it is also necessary to acknowledge that my data gathering relied on self-reporting. This could have been improved by undertaking research through observation of situations and settings within a school environment. There are said to be many benefits of such research (Cohen & Manion, 1994). Sadly, it was beyond the resourcing and scope of my study and the access to the schools. A well-known study that relied on observation as a method was the one conducted by Willis (1977) into the education of (White) working class boys. Hopefully some future researcher will conduct a similar study into the experiences of Pakistani boys.

Another area for further research is the need to investigate the situation of particular groups within the Pakistani category, which is often assumed to be homogenous. First of all, not all of Pakistani young people underachieve. Many do well, such as the boys in Grammar. Pakistani girls also do better at school than their male co-ethnics but could they do even better? Are there strategies that may help to raise educational attainment for both boys and girls? What can be learnt from the experience of the *achieving* Pakistani pupils? Furthermore within the underachieving boys there may be some whose needs are possibly more serious, such as the Kashmiris; said to make-up as much as three-quarters of the community as a whole (Abbas, 2010). It is possible that Kashmiri children's educational needs and situation require particular improvements (Ali, 2007; Ali et al., 2014). There may be others too, who need particular attention. In one conversation with a Pakistani community activist it was pointed out that other sub-groups of Pakistani children such as Pathans (originating from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan) underachieve at school. Such areas need exploration. Another way of approaching this could be through a neighbourhood focus. Throughout my forty plus years in Birmingham, I have often been aware of how different schools, within different neighbourhoods serving the Pakistani community have been able to achieve very differing results. This deserves exploration. Then there are young people in other ethnic groups whose attainment is a matter of concern, such as the White working class. Maybe what is needed are a number of strategies, specifically targeted at particular groups of pupils according to their underachievement. Of course, I accept that within the current political climate (see Overington, 2012) such an approach is unlikely. But then political climate could change. It was only a decade or so ago when the 'education talk' was different to what it is now.

Although I did not investigate racism in my study, over the six year life of my study, this appears to have become an issue, especially in the form of Islamophobia. There are reports (Davies, 2016) of Pakistanis and Muslims from other backgrounds encountering this for the first time. Some of this maybe an issue in Birmingham.

I am conscious of a major omission in my study, that of ‘in-school’ matters. For example, I did not investigate curriculum. With the backdrop of multicultural education and culturally responsive pedagogy, it would be worth investigating what an ‘inclusive curriculum’ (TTA, 2000) would look like for Pakistani children or schools with a mainly Muslim population, such as Community. Classroom observation is another area I did not include in my research. This would no doubt have shed light on whether the students’ statements about themselves – attitudes to school, respect for teachers etc – were actually true.

I am conscious that by focusing on Pakistani boys as a subject of research one is in danger of making them out as a special subject when, in reality, they may be no more special than boys from other ethnic groups. It is possible that some of what is already known about ‘boys’ under/achievement’ applies equally to Pakistanis. I shall leave these matters to future researchers.

7.9 Conclusion

When I began my study, I expressed my desire to make a difference to the Pakistani community. I had pointed out that I did not just want to describe the world but change it. I believe I have begun that process, by sharing my research with fellow academics, education practitioners, policy makers and lay people in the Pakistani community.

I set out to discuss what a responsive education system would look like for Pakistani children. Here, I drew on the concepts of multicultural education and cultural responsive pedagogy, as well as community education and an area-based curriculum.

I considered how such an education service could be strategically achieved within the current educational landscape, away from the previous local authority-based framework. I have suggested Positive Action and new funding systems in order to achieve the desired outcome.

I commented on the role of the Pakistani community in raising its concerns within the political and policy arenas. I then explored how the madrassah system of education could be improved. Included here were improvements in the curriculum; ways to incorporate madrassah education within the state system; whether madrassah attendance could be reduced, certainly by the time children started secondary school and through offering some of the teaching (Islamic Studies, Urdu and Arabic) within the secondary school curriculum. I explored whether an 'extended schools' model of education could be utilised in order to respond to Pakistani students' needs, including the facility to enable them to complete more homework. Although, the focus of my study has been on secondary schools, I pointed to the possible role of primary schools in the teaching of IRE.

I explored ways of improving teacher responsiveness, including an increased presence and contribution of Pakistani and Muslim teachers. I suggested ways to improve teacher understanding of Pakistani Muslim heritage. Lastly, I considered the limitations of my research and pointed to possible areas for further research.

Appendix 1 RESEARCH TIMELINE

The following timeline lists the activities undertaken along my research journey with the schools concerned:

- 3.10.2011 Introductory and exploratory email sent to a number of Birmingham schools.
- 4.10.2011 Academy⁴⁸ responded, expressing their willingness to become a research site.
- 17.10.2011 Meeting held with Acting Headteacher at Comprehensive. They agreed to discuss amongst their Senior Leadership Team whether to participate in the research.
- 18.10.2011 Comprehensive agreed to participate in the research.
- 19.1.2012 Acting Headteacher at Comprehensive moved to another school.
- 27.3.2012 Introductory and exploratory email sent to Grammar.
- 28.3.2012 Headteacher at Grammar replied, expressing their willingness to participate in the research.
- 8.10.2012 Email sent to all schools, outlining my specific research requirements i.e. (for the interviews) 8 Pakistani Year 11 boys (mixture of FSM/Non-FSM); their parents and one or two teachers who knew the boys. If possible, one of the teachers was requested to be of Pakistani heritage. It was explained that the interviews would take about 45 minutes. In addition, schools were requested to ask all Year 11 pupils (boys and girls, across all ethnic groups) to complete an online questionnaire, which would take them about 8 minutes to complete.
- 8.10.2012 Grammar requested that pupil interviews should be no longer than 30 minutes. This was agreed. They also informed me that I would need to obtain a new CRB clearance. The other schools had not raised this as a requirement and were presumably happy with my existing CRB clearance.
- 11.10.2012 Ethical approval given, to proceed with research. I informed the schools of this.
- 26.11.2012 New contact at Comprehensive requested further information about my research. This was supplied.
- 29.11.2012 Comprehensive requested to know the purpose of my research. This was explained.
- 18.12.2012 I received upgrade. The three schools were informed of this. I provided them letters for the interviewees (Appendix 2).
- 21.12.2012 Comprehensive wrote, informing that they were no longer willing to participate in the research, in the following words:
“I am sorry to inform you that we will not be able to assist you in your research, due to the fact that it is just targeted at one ethnic group. We only contribute to external requests for survey information if they allow equality of opportunity and access.”
- 6.2.2013 At Academy, interviews with the Pakistani boys commenced. Parallel with these I also began to interview their parents and the teachers.

⁴⁸ There were 4 schools involved. All were given pseudonyms.

6.2.2013	Replacement for Comprehensive found, with Community, a school where I was undertaking consultancy, willing to participate in the research.
10.2.2013	Link sent to Academy for the online questionnaire to be completed by their students.
11.2.2013	I informed Grammar that I had obtained CRB clearance.
27.2.2013	At Community, interviews with the Pakistani boys commenced. Parallel with these I also began to interview their parents and the teachers.
27.2.2013	Link sent to Community for the online questionnaire to be completed by their students.
17.4.2013	At Grammar, interviews with the Pakistani boys commenced. Parallel with these I also began to interview their parents and the teachers. Link sent to their students for the online questionnaire to be completed by their students.
23.4.2013	Community raised a query about the online questionnaire; was it all pupils or just the ones who were interviewed. This had already been made clear to them that it was all pupils. I reiterated the information.
30.4.2013	Community informed me that the questionnaire was being completed that week. However, they pointed out that some students were now on study leave and would not be able to complete the questionnaire.
3.6.2013	Grammar informed me that they had done their best to encourage their students to complete the online questionnaire. Also that after this date I should not expect any more to do so as they were now involved in examinations.

Appendix 2: LETTERS TO RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

Letter to contact teacher

Pakistani boys' educational achievement in Birmingham schools

Dear teacher

I am in the process of looking into the educational achievement of Pakistani boys within Birmingham schools.

The research

The research I am carrying out is a part of my PhD course at Warwick University. Therefore, all my work is being carried out within the rules and regulations of the University where I am being supervised by a Professor.

I have already carried out a review of existing literature on this subject in order to learn from others who are experts in this subject. This has helped me to identify the gaps in knowledge which I hope my own research will help to fill.

I am hoping to talk to a number of Pakistani boys in three different schools across Birmingham.

Interviews with students

I would be grateful if you would help me to interview 4 Pakistani Y11 boys who are on FSM and 4 who are not FSM. It would be good to have a mix of abilities e.g. those who are expected to achieve 5 A*-C and those who are not or are expected to do less well.

The interview will take no more than 45 minutes of your student's time. I am keen to arrange the interview at a time which does not take the student away from something really important.

To make sure that I don't miss anything, the interview will be recorded. However, I will only use the recording for my own purpose and will not share it with anyone else.

The student's rights

The students' views are very important but it's up to him whether to take part in this research. Nothing negative will happen if he decides not to take part. During the interview, if he says something he wishes he hadn't, he can ask for this to be withdrawn.

Also, if he starts talking to me and then decides that he does not want to be part of the research then he can change his mind. Any information he has already provided will be destroyed without being used.

Student Questionnaire

In addition, I would be grateful if all Y11 students would complete an on-line questionnaire for me. This will take under 10 minutes.

Interviews with teachers

I would be grateful if I could interview 2-3 teachers who teach Y11 students, including those I am to interview. It would be helpful if at least one of the teachers was of Pakistani background.

Confidentiality

The discussion will be kept confidential. When the information is written up, names of interviewees will not be used so that no one will know who said what. The name of the school will also be kept confidential.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me:

0798 xxxxxxxx

Karamat@forwardpartnership.org.uk

Letter to teachers as interviewees

Pakistani boys' educational achievement in Birmingham schools

Dear teacher

I am in the process of looking into the educational achievement of Pakistani boys within Birmingham schools. I am writing to ask you whether you are willing to take part in my research and answer some questions.

The research

The research I am carrying out is a part of my PhD course at Warwick University. Therefore, all my work is being carried out within the rules and regulations of the University where I am being supervised by a Professor.

I have already carried out a review of existing literature on this subject in order to learn from others who are experts in this subject. This has helped me to identify the gaps in knowledge which I hope my own research will help to fill.

I am hoping to talk to a number of Pakistani boys in three different schools across Birmingham. In addition, I am hoping to interview the boys' parents and teachers.

The interview

This will take no more than 45 minutes of your time. I am happy fit around your timetable.

To make sure that I don't miss anything, the interview will be recorded. However, I will only use the recording for my own purpose and will not share it with anyone else.

Confidentiality

The discussion will be kept confidential. When the information is written up, your name will not be used so that no one will know who said what. The name of the school will also be kept confidential.

Your rights

Your views are very important but it's up to you whether to take part in this research. During the interview, if you say something you wish you hadn't, you can ask for this to be withdrawn.

Also, if you start talking to me and then decide that you do not want to be part of the research then you can change your mind. Any information you have already provided will be destroyed without being used.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me:

0798 xxxxxxxx

Karamat@forwardpartnership.org.uk

Letter to parents asking them to take part in the research as parents

Pakistani boys' educational achievement in Birmingham schools

Dear parents

I am in the process of looking into the educational achievement of Pakistani boys within Birmingham schools. I am writing to ask whether you as parents would be happy to meet me and answer some questions about your son's education.

The research

The research I am carrying out is a part of my PhD course at Warwick University. Therefore, all my work is being carried out within the rules and regulations of the University where I am being supervised by a Professor.

I have already carried out a review of existing literature on this subject in order to learn from others who are experts in this subject. This has helped me to identify the gaps in knowledge which I hope my own research will help to fill.

I am hoping to talk to a number of other Pakistani parents who have boys in three schools across Birmingham.

The interview

This will take no more than 45 minutes of his time.

To make sure that I don't miss anything, the interview will be recorded. However, once I have listened to the interview and taken all the information from it, I will destroy the recording.

Confidentiality

The discussion will be kept confidential. When the information is written up, your name will not be used so that no one will know who said what. The name of the school will also be kept confidential.

Your rights

Your views are very important but it's up to you whether to take part in this research. Nothing negative will happen if you decide not to take part.

During the interview, if you say something you wish you hadn't, you can ask for this to be withdrawn.

Also, if during your conversation with me you decide that you don't want it to be part of the research then you can change your mind. Any information you have already provided will be destroyed without being used.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me:

0798 xxxxxxxx

Karamat@forwardpartnership.org.uk

Letter to parents

Pakistani boys' educational achievement in Birmingham schools

Dear parent

I am in the process of looking into the educational achievement of Pakistani boys within Birmingham schools.

I am writing to you for two reasons:

1. To request your permission as parents to talk to your son at his school and ask him some questions about his education.
2. To ask if you would be happy to be interviewed yourself as parents

I have attached two sets of information on the following pages.

Please note that I have CRB clearance at an enhanced level.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me:

0798 xxxxxxxx

Karamat@forwardpartnership.org.uk

Requesting parents' permission for their son to participate in the research

The research

The research I am carrying out is a part of my PhD course at Warwick University. All my work is being carried out within the rules and regulations of the University where I am being supervised by a Professor.

I have already carried out a review of existing literature on this subject in order to learn from others who are experts in this subject. This has helped me to identify the gaps in knowledge which I hope my own research will help to fill.

I am hoping to talk to a number of Pakistani boys, their parents and teachers in three different schools across Birmingham.

Confidentiality

The discussion will be kept confidential. When the information is written up, the real name of the interviewee will not be used so that no one will know who said what. The name of the school will also be kept confidential.

The student interview

This will take no more than 45 minutes of your son's time. I will work with the school to make sure that my meeting with your son takes place at a time which does not take him away from something really important.

To make sure that I don't miss anything, the interview will be recorded. However, I will only use the recording for my own purpose and will not share it with anyone else.

Your son's rights

Your son's views are very important but it's up to him whether to take part in this research. Nothing negative will happen if he decides not to take part. During the interview, if your son says something he wishes he hadn't, he can ask for this to be withdrawn.

Also, if he starts talking to me and then decides that he does not want to be part of the research then he can change his mind. Any information he has already provided will be destroyed without being used.

Requesting parents to participate in the research in their own right as parents

It is very important that as well as students, I interview you as their parent.

The parent interview

This will take no more than 45 minutes of your time. I will be happy to meet you at a time and place of your choosing.

To make sure that I don't miss anything, the interview will be recorded. However, I will only use the recording for my own purpose and will not share it with anyone else.

Your rights

As with your son, nothing negative will happen if you decide not to take part in this research. During the interview, if you say something you wish you hadn't, you can ask for this to be withdrawn.

Also, if you start talking to me and then decide that you do not want to be part of the research then you can change your mind. Any information you have already provided will be destroyed without being used.

Educational achievement of Pakistani boys in Birmingham
Consent form for parents/carers

Name of pupil_____

I have received a letter giving me details of the above research.

I agree / do not agree for my son to take part in a single one-to-one interview.

I agree / do not agree to take part in the research myself.

Signature of parent/carer:

_____Date:_____

Letter to students inviting them to take part in the research

Pakistani boys' educational achievement in Birmingham schools

Dear student

I am in the process of looking into the educational achievement of Pakistani boys within Birmingham schools. I am writing to you to ask whether you would be willing to take part in this research and be interviewed, on your own.

The research

The research I am carrying out is a part of my PhD course at Warwick University.

I have already looked at what others have written about this subject. This has helped me to identify the gaps in the knowledge which I hope to fill through my research.

My plan is to talk to a number of Pakistani boys in three different schools across Birmingham.

The interview

This will take about 30 minutes of your time. I will work with your school to make sure that my meeting with you takes place at a time which does not take you away from something really important.

To make sure that I don't miss anything, the interview will be recorded. However, I will only use the recording for my own purpose and will not share it with anyone else.

Confidentiality

The discussion will be kept confidential.

When the information is written up, your name will not be used so that no one will know who said what. The name of the school will also be kept confidential.

Your rights

Your views are very important. It is up to you whether to take part in this research. Nothing negative will happen if you decide not to take part. During the interview, if you say something you wish you hadn't, you can ask for this to be withdrawn.

Also, if you start talking to me and then decide that you don't want to be part of the research then you can change your mind. Any information you have already provided will be destroyed without being used.

Karamat Iqbal

Educational achievement of Pakistani boys in Birmingham
Consent form for students

Name of
interviewee:_____

I have received a letter giving me details of the above research project and asking me to take part. I understand what it means for me. I agree to take part in a single one-to-one interview.

I agree for my interview being recorded on the basis that my views will be reported anonymously. *(Please circle one option.)* No Yes

I understand that my views will be kept confidential and used anonymously to inform the research being undertaken.

I understand that taking part in the interviews is voluntary (up to me) and that I can withdraw at any time without having to explain why and without being penalised or disadvantaged in any way.

Signature of pupil participant in the research
_____Date:_____

Appendix 3: QUESTIONNAIRE

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

School name:				
Gender:	Boy <input type="checkbox"/>	Girl <input type="checkbox"/>		
Ethnic Group:	White - British	<input type="checkbox"/>	Indian	<input type="checkbox"/>
	White - Other group	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pakistani	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Black - Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bangladeshi	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Black - African	<input type="checkbox"/>	Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Black - Other group	<input type="checkbox"/>	Asian - Other group	<input type="checkbox"/>
Eligible for free school meals	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Any other ethnic group <input type="checkbox"/>	

On this sheet are some questions to find out what you think. This is not a test.
There are no right or wrong answers. Answer each question saying truthfully
what you think by putting a tick in the appropriate box.

PERSONAL

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I always attend school unless I'm ill				
Finishing school is important to achieve my career choice				
I think doing well at school is very important for my future				
It's important for me to have role models who are from my own ethnic background				
I work hard at school				
My family can afford to pay for my after-school activities and trips				

HOME AND FAMILY

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I have access to a computer at home				
Someone from my family usually comes to parents' evenings / reviews at school				
If I need help with my homework, there is someone in my family who I can turn to				

My community has strong links with my school				
I have a quiet place in which to do school work				
My family responsibilities interfere with my education				
My family think that school is very important for my future				
The school has staff who can speak to my family in our community language				

MY_RELIGION

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
My religion is very important in my life				
It is important for me that my teachers have a good understanding of my religion				
There are good links between my school and mosque / temple / church				
Teachers deal fairly with incidents involving religious abuse				

In the last 2 years, have you attended regular activities at a mosque/temple/church

Yes ☐ No ☐

If No, please skip to the next section – My Teachers

How often did you attend the above activities?

Once a week ☐ Twice a week ☐ Three or more times a week ☐

What did the above activities focus on? (please tick all that apply)

Religious education ☐

Community language ☐

School related work ☐

Other ☐ (please give details below)

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The religious classes I have attended were a waste of time				
I have to spend too much time in religious classes which interferes with my school work				
What I learnt in my religious classes should be taught at school				

MY TEACHERS

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Teachers show respect for my cultural heritage				
It is important for me to have teachers of the same sex as me				
Teachers in my school treat all pupils fairly				
It is important for me to have teachers from my ethnic group				
My teachers value different cultures				
It is important for me to have teachers from my religion				
Teachers deal fairly with racist incidents				

POST-16 OUTCOMES

I intend to stay in full-time education (either school or college) after year 11	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
What level of qualifications do you expect to achieve by the end of your education?	No GCSE/GNVQs Some GCSE/GNVQ passes 5 'good' GCSE/GNVQ passes 'A'/'AS' levels University Degree	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

What stops you achieving more at school?

What career do you think you will be following when you are 18?

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

Appendix 4: INTERVIEWEES

Academy pupils and parents

Pupils	Parents
Javed NFSM, 5GCSEs ⁴⁹	
Khalad FSM, 5 GCSEs	Nawaz Mirpur ⁵⁰ . Been in UK 40 + years. Used to be CFC machine programmer
Ibrar FSM, 5 GCSEs	Zeinab & Afsar Lahore; Afsar born in Kenya, Zeinab born in Lahore. Been in UK 30+ years.
Wasim FSM, 5 GCSEs	Najeeb Mirpur. Been in UK 30 years. Used to work in business, restaurant, double glazing.
Imran NFSM, 5GCSEs	Ashraf Gurgushti. Carpet fitter.
Waheed NFSM, N5GCSEs	
Majid NFSM, 5GCSEs	

Academy teachers

Jean	Achievement Leader; used to be Head of RE. White, female
Mehboob	Science teacher. Pakistani. Male.
Zahida	SLE (Specialist Leader of Education). Pakistani. Female.

Community pupils and parents

Pupils	Parents
Razaq FSM, 5GCSEs	Tazeem Gujar Khan. Been in UK 18 years. Single mum.

⁴⁹ Predicted grades.

⁵⁰ This is the area within Pakistan where the parents came from.

Pervez NFSM, N5GCSEs	Sakina Gujrat. Been in Birmingham 6 years. Husband delivery man.
Saleem FSM, 5GCSEs	
Habibul NFSM, 5GCSEs	
Mazar NFSM, 5GCSEs	Zaman Lala Moosa, ex-Mirpur; moved because of Mangla Dam. Been in UK 40+ years. Electrician.
Faisal NFSM, N5GCSEs	Khalaq Mirpur. Been in UK 8 years. Manual labourer.
Israr NFSM, 5GCSEs	Faiz Mirpur. Been in Birmingham 37 years. Manual labourer.
Amir NFSM, 5GCSEs	Junaid Jehlum, ex-Mirpur; moved because of Mangla Dam. Born in Birmingham. Runs recruitment business.
Khadam NFSM, 5GCSEs	
Tahir NFSM, 5GCSEs	Jamil Gujar Khan. Been in Birmingham 45 years. works in health and safety

Community teachers

Linda	Head of Y11. White British. Female. Been at school for 6 years. Subject specialism: psychology.
Abid	Science teacher. Pakistani. Male. Been at the school three years Ex pupil.
Richards	Headteacher. White. Male.

Grammar pupils and parents

Pupils	Parents
Habib NFSM, 5GCSEs	Syed (father) Multan. Doctor. (Syeda, mother)

Aakif NFSM, 5GCSEs	
Bilal NFSM, 5GCSEs	
Hamzah NFSM, 5GCSEs	Wali Lahore. Been in UK for 5+ years. Hospital doctor.
Danyal NFSM, 5GCSEs	Hafza Faisalabad (husband from Mirpur). Been in Birmingham 18 years. Learning Support Assistant.
Hashmi NFSM, 5GCSEs	Daalat Mirpur. Born in Birmingham. Sales Assistant.
Iqbal NFSM, 5GCSEs	Shahida Mirpur. Service provider, care homes

Grammar teachers

Masood	Part-time cover teacher. Pakistani. Male.
Steve	Head of Years 10 and 11, also Head of Design and Technology. Been at school 20 + years. White. Male.

Head of Private Tuition Centre

Private tutor Yaqoob

Private tutor Afzal

Appendix 5: INTERVIEW SCHEDULES

Students

Research Question:

Understanding Pakistani boys' achievement in Birmingham schools

Do teachers understand the distinctive cultural heritage of Pakistani boys and the impact this might have on the boys' achievement?

- Would you say your teachers understand your cultural background? - Understanding of your home life, community, religion
- How do you know? Can you give me some examples?
- Is it important that teachers have this understanding? - In what ways might this help you?
- What more could the school do about this? - Such as provide training?

Do the boys attend a mosque/madrassah after school?

- How many hours an evening do you spend at the mosque/madrassah?
- Do you think this has an impact on your school work? - Does it help? Does it hinder? In what ways?
- Would you like to attend more often /less often or is it about right? - Have you ever discussed the frequency of your attendance with your parents?
- What links are there between your school and mosque/madrassah? (If they don't attend a mosque now but did so in the past) what links were there then between the mosque and school?
- What links are there between you school and home? - What more needs to be done to improve these links?
- What other learning do you take part in after school? - Participation in leisure activities. Does this help with school work?

Does teacher race and gender matter in addressing educational achievement of Pakistani boys?

- Is it important for you to have teachers who are men? Is it important for you to have teachers who are Pakistani? What about teachers who are Asian or from other ethnic minority groups?

Do Pakistani boys have access to appropriate role models?

- Who do you look up? - Someone at school? In the family? In the wider community?
- Do Pakistani boys experience low educational aspirations or low expectations from significant others? (Teachers / parents / peers etc)
- What are your plans after leaving school? – Such as going to college, university- away from home or in Birmingham.
- What do your teachers expect you to do? - ask for examples.
- What do your parents expect you to do? – ask for examples

Parents

Research Question:

Understanding Pakistani boys' achievement in Birmingham schools

Do teachers understand the distinctive cultural heritage of Pakistani boys and the impact this might have on the boys' achievement?

- Would you say the teachers in your son's school understand your cultural background? - Understanding of your home life, community, religion.
- How do you know? Can you give me some examples?
- Is it important that teachers have this understanding? - In what ways might this help your son's education?
- What more could the school do about this? - Such as provide training?

Does your son attend a mosque/madrassah after school?

- How many hours an evening does he spend at the mosque/madrassah?
- Do you think this has an impact on his school work? - Does it help? Does it hinder? In what ways?
- What links are there between your son's school and the mosque/madrassah? - What more needs to be done to improve these links?

- What links are there between your school and home? - What more needs to be done to improve these links?
- Do you think your son's attendance at mosque has an impact on his school work? - Does it help? Does it hinder? In what ways?
- Would you like him to attend more often/less often or is it about right?
- What other learning does your son take part in after school? - Participation in leisure activities. Does this help with school work?
- Do you provide or have you in the past provided paid for tuition for your son? How much money did you invest on this? Was it worthwhile?

Does teacher race and gender matter in addressing educational achievement of Pakistani boys?

- Is it important for you to have teachers who are men? Is it important for you to have teachers who are Pakistani? What about teachers who are Asian or from other ethnic minority groups?

Do Pakistani boys have access to appropriate role models?

- Who does your son look up to? - Someone at school? in the family?, in the wider community
- Does it matter if the person your son looks up to is not of Pakistani heritage?

Do Pakistani boys experience low educational aspirations or low expectations from significant others? (Teachers / parents / peers etc)

- What are your son's plans after leaving school? - Such as going to college, university- away from home or in Birmingham.
- Is this in line with your plan?
- What do your teachers expect him to do? - ask for examples.

Teachers

Research Question:

Understanding Pakistani boys' achievement in Birmingham schools

Do teachers understand the distinctive cultural heritage of Pakistani boys and the impact this might have on the boys' achievement?

- Would you say you understand your Pakistani pupils' cultural background? - Understanding of their home life, community, religion. Can you give me some examples?

- Is it important that you have this understanding? - In what ways does it help?
- What more should be done about this and by whom? – Such as provide training?

Do the boys attend a mosque/madrassah after school?

- Do your Pakistani pupils attend a mosque/madrassah after school? - How many hours an evening do they spend at the mosque/madrassah?
- What links are there between the school and mosque/madrassah? - What more needs to be done to improve the links?
- Do you think your Pakistani pupils' attendance at mosque has an impact on their school work? - Does it help? Does it hinder? In what ways?
- What other learning do your Pakistani pupils take part in after school? - Participation in leisure activities. Does this help with school work?

Does teacher race and gender matter in addressing educational achievement of Pakistani boys?

- Do you think it matters that there are male teachers in the school?
- Do you think it matters that there are Pakistani teachers in the school?

Do Pakistani boys have access to appropriate role models?

- Who do your Pakistani boys look up to? - Someone at school? In their family? in the wider community?

Do Pakistani boys experience low educational aspirations and expectations?

- What do you know about your Pakistani pupils' plans after leaving school? - College, university- away from home or in Birmingham.
- Are these plans appropriate to their ability? - ask for examples

Appendix 6: EVENTS WHERE RESEARCH SHARED

- The education leadership team at Birmingham City Council (17.12.2013)
- Coventry University. *A new social contract? A Pakistani-Birmingham case study* at Social Relations and Human Security, (22-23.3. 2013).
- Oxford University. *Pakistani boys' achievement- a cause for concern!* [Students' Ongoing Research In Education Studies]. (18.3.2014)
- National Society of the Church of England. . *Pakistani boys' achievement in Birmingham* [Faith in Research] (4.6.2014). .
- Canterbury Christ Church University. *Pakistani boys' education; religious and secular.* [Foundations: Underpinning Christian Education?] (11- 13.7.2014).
- Birmingham Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education (9.2.2015)
- Bristol University. 'Deen Aur Dunya' - Pakistani boys' education in Birmingham schools [Research in Education across Boundaries] (2.6.2015).
- St Mary's University. *Deen and Dunya* ('religion and of the world') – Pakistani boys' education in Birmingham [Association of University Lecturers of RE] (1-3.9.2015).
- British Education Research Association. *Pakistani boys' education in Birmingham schools.* (15-17.9.2015).
- Birmingham South Area Network RE Leaders (3.2.2016)
- Birmingham Humanists. *Pakistani boys' education and the place of religion.* [Should Education be Secular?]. (6.2.2016).
- University of Warwick. *Creating coherence for British Muslim pupils'*. International workshop on Islamic Education and Public schooling in Europe (6-8.4.2016).
- University of Warwick. *Pakistani Boys' education in Birmingham.* Making a Difference Conference. (21.5.2016).
- Lancaster University. *Deen and Dunya - Pakistani boys' education in Birmingham schools and the place of religion* [SocRel, Annual Conference] (12-13.7.2016).
- University of Warwick. *Excellence in Education Lectures: 'Educational underachievement – focussing on White working class and Pakistani children'* (12.10.2016).
- Birmingham Education Partnership: *Raising the Educational Achievement of Pakistani Boys in Birmingham* (20.03.2017).

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